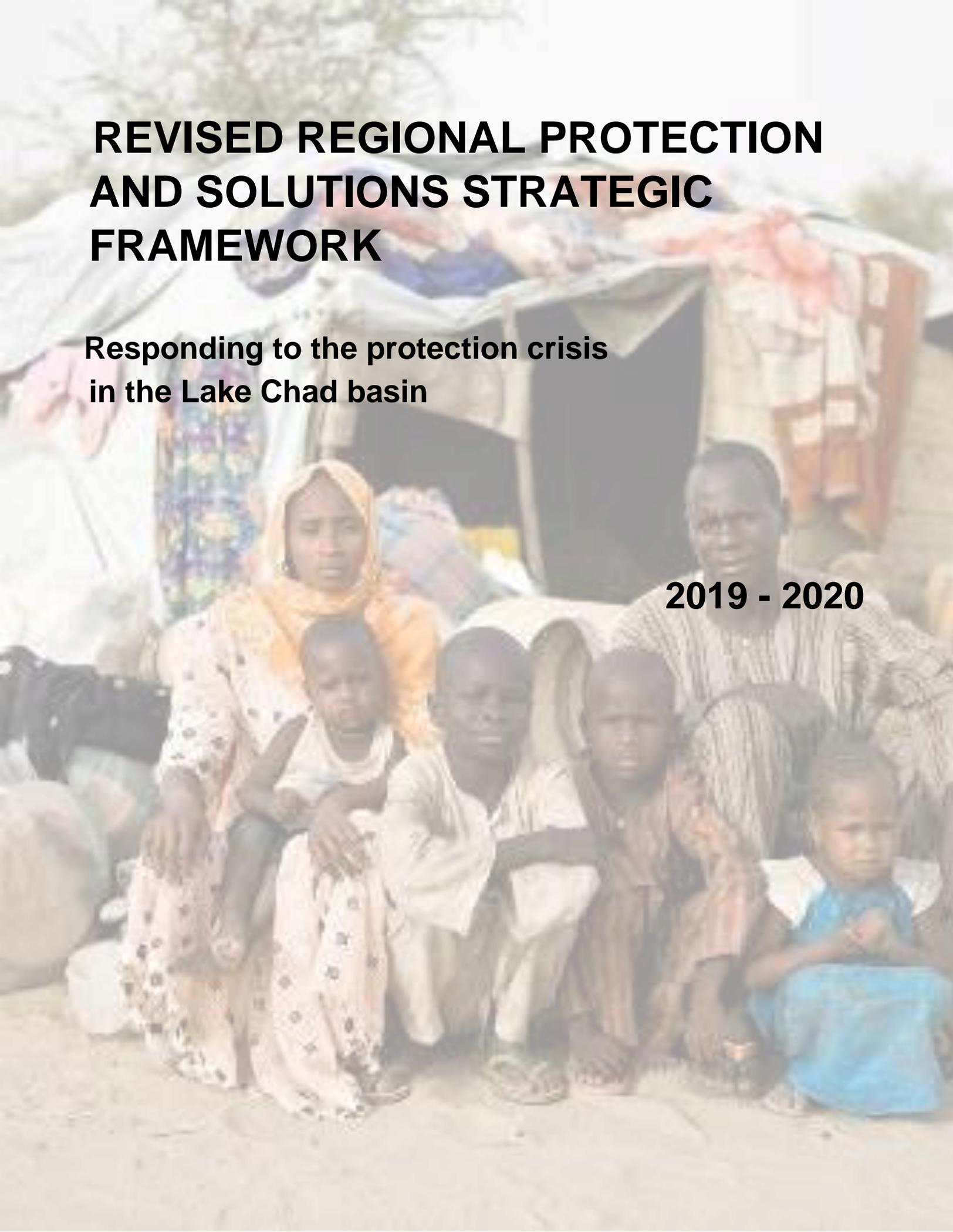


REVISED REGIONAL PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

**Responding to the protection crisis
in the Lake Chad basin**

2019 - 2020



NOTES

This document sets forth a regional strategic framework to guide the humanitarian response on key protection issues relating to the populations affected by the conflict-induced crisis in the Lake Chad Basin, including refugees, IDPs and other affected persons. The Framework provides a comprehensive overview of key protection concerns and risks, with a focus on cross-border and common protection issues, and elaborates main objectives, priorities and response strategy for each.

The Framework was developed by the Regional Protection Working Group (RPWG) in Dakar under the leadership of UNHCR Regional Office in Dakar and in close consultation with UNHCR colleagues at country, regional and headquarter levels, as well as in coordination with key agencies and civil society organisations working on protection issues at national and regional levels.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Nigeria Regional Refugee Response Plan 2019-2020 and the Revised Lake Chad Basin Humanitarian Needs and Requirement Overview 2018 and respective country humanitarian response plans.

CREDITS

The maps in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the RPWG concerning the legal status of any country or territory or area, of its authorities, or the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

All statistics are provisional and subject to change.
Cover photo: UNHCR/Hélène Caux

Table of Contents

➤ OVERVIEW: RESPONDING TO THE PROTECTION CRISIS.....	4
➤ KEY PROTECTION CONCERNS.....	8
- Forced displacement and access to asylum and protection	9
- Civil-military coordination and the civilian character of refugee and IDP hosting areas	11
- Registration, documentation and addressing nationality issues in crises	14
- Upholding human rights in the context of security measures	16
- Alternatives to camps and relocation	19
- Persons with specific protection needs	21
- Child protection	23
- Sexual and gender based violence	25
- Education	28
- Comprehensive durable solutions	30
- Assistance and protection to other affected populations	33
➤ ANNEX	
- Abuja Action Statement	35
- Reaffirmation of the commitments of the Abuja Action Statement and their implementation	38

Overview

Responding to the protection crisis in the Lake Chad basin

Nearly 2.5 million people are forcibly displaced in the Lake Chad Basin region¹ due to the ongoing conflict, and new displacement continues. Resorting to terror, widespread sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), exposure to trafficking² including abductions, forced recruitment and suicide bombings, extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances and attacks on civilians persist. The context of ongoing insecurity poses particular challenges to ensuring an appropriate protection environment. The situation is further compounded by the fragile socio-economic context of the Sahel, which includes chronic poverty, harsh climatic conditions, recurrent epidemics, poor infrastructure and limited access to basic services.

Ongoing hostilities in all affected countries, as well as the absence of basic services, have created acute humanitarian and protection risks for those impacted by the crisis, including refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees and local communities. Renewed efforts are needed to support duty bearers in ensuring the protection of the affected populations.

Throughout 2018, armed attacks persisted across the Lake Chad Basin region, targeting civilians, including displaced populations and their sites, towns and villages. Despite evolution of security conditions in significant areas in North-East Nigeria under Government control, conditions in most affected areas are not yet conducive for the return of Nigerian refugees and IDPs and displacement of populations continues to take place. New insecurity developments have been noticed in the North-West of Nigeria over the past quarter of 2019, prompting new displacements from the Zamfara State. A similar situation of insecurity and humanitarian needs prevails in Chad's Lake region, Cameroonian border areas and Niger's Diffa and Maradi regions.

As the crisis enters its ninth year, the situation of displacement has become a protracted one. Ongoing hostilities, pre-existing social and climatic conditions and resources and governance constraints, continue to have a negative impact on affected populations, exacerbating humanitarian and protection needs. Many people remain inaccessible to humanitarian actors due to insecurity, particularly in Nigeria's Borno and Zamfara States, and border areas of Cameroon and Niger.

Today, the humanitarian and protection situations in Nigeria, as well as in the border areas with Cameroon, Chad and Niger, remains dire. The violence has uprooted nearly 2.5 million civilians within their respective countries, including over 1.9 million IDPs in Nigeria alone. In addition, some 229,000 Nigerian refugees have fled to neighbouring Cameroon, Chad and Niger.³

The protection issues are many and complex. Persistent insecurity and Non-State Armed Group's (NSAG) attacks on civilian – including the targeting of settlements – remain serious security and protection risks. The security context and

On 28 – 29 January 2019, the Governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger met in Abuja, Nigeria, to discuss current protection concerns and challenges in the Lake Chad basin. They reaffirmed commitments made with the adoption of the [Abuja Action Statement in 2016 and their implementation](#), elaborating key actions in the renewal of efforts to enhance the protection and solutions environment for persons affected by the crisis.

This Framework aims to support the affected countries in the implementation of these actions by setting forth a regional protection strategic framework to guide the humanitarian response on key protection issues relating to refugees, IDPs and other affected persons. The Framework provides a comprehensive overview of key protection concerns and risks, with a focus on cross-border and shared protection issues, and elaborates main objectives, priorities and response strategy for each.

¹ UNHCR Data Portal, Nigeria Situation, as of 30 June 2019.

² Nigeria Humanitarian Response Plan (2019 – 2021)

³ For the latest statistics on persons forcibly displaced by the crisis, see the UNHCR Data Portal for the Nigeria Situation and <https://displacement.iom.int/nigeria>

cross border expansion of NSAG has also led to restrictive measures by states' security organs around border areas, and refugee and IDP locations, such as border closures, interdiction of using motorcycles, banning some specific livelihood activities and severe limitations on freedom of movement. Many persons have been displaced multiple times, which further erodes the self-protection capacities of individuals.

Access to rights is being limited, including the right to seek and enjoy asylum. Arrests and detention are also on the rise as civilians, including refugees and IDPs, are suspected of collaborating with NSAG. Children have also been the target of arbitrary arrests and detention caused by suspicion of ties with extremist groups⁴. At the same time, in preparation for military interventions and due to insecurity, Governments have organized the relocation of civilians from border areas. In fact, cases of forced returns and relocations of IDPs, as well as of refugees and asylum seekers to Nigeria, in violation of the principle of non-refoulement, continued to raise concerns in 2018.

The crisis has adversely affected the most vulnerable civilian population, particularly women and children, older persons, and persons with disabilities or serious medical conditions. Almost 63 per cent of those displaced are children and the number of females and children headed households is on the increase⁵ because male heads of households have either been detained, killed or fear to return to join their families.

Sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), exposure to trafficking and other forms of violence and abuse, is widespread, and many people have suffered the trauma of violent experiences. Women, girls and boys remain the most vulnerable to SGBV and the most targeted by NSAG, with abductions, forced marriage, sale of girls, sexual slavery, use as suicide bombers and forced conscription. Cases of exploitation and abuse and transactional sex have been also reported occurring in IDP camps.

Since the conflict erupted in 2009, in Nigeria 611 teachers have been killed, 19,000 teachers displaced, 910 schools damaged or destroyed, and more than 1,500 schools forced to close. As a result, an estimated 900,000 children have lost access to learning while 75 per cent of children in camps do not attend school.⁶

In addition, much of the population in the Lake Chad Basin lacks documentation, posing a risk of statelessness, restriction of movement, risk of detention and therefore facing impediments to accessing services and rights, as well as complicating efforts to identify and register asylum-seekers and refugees.

Nor are the persons affected by the conflict restricted to displaced persons. With the vast majority of displaced persons living in host communities, the impact on local populations is significant, as is the strain displacement has placed on limited resources and services throughout the region. Local economies and livelihoods have been disrupted by the conflict and security measures, which have included restrictions on movements and livelihoods activities.

Although conditions in much of north-eastern Nigeria are not yet conducive for return, and although repeated cross-border movements may be occurring, a significant number of IDPs and refugees have returned, sometimes under conditions that have not been voluntary, safe and dignified. Many of these return movements have resulted in secondary displacements as areas of origin remain insecure and inaccessible.

The magnitude of the crisis occurring in a conflict characterized by systematic violations of human rights and international humanitarian law requires the response to be strategic, prioritised and focused. It demands a comprehensive response by protection, humanitarian and development actors to address not only immediate critical protection needs, but also the challenges at the core of the root causes fuelling the conflict and violence, such as issues of exclusion, marginalisation and abject poverty. In line with the reaffirmation of the commitments of the Abuja Action Statement, humanitarian and development actors must strengthen their efforts to support the Governments and duty bearers, through a comprehensive approach to establish and strengthen an appropriate protection and solutions environment for the affected populations.

⁴ UNICEF Nigeria welcomes release of over 180 children suspected of Boko Haram ties from administrative custody, 09 July 2018

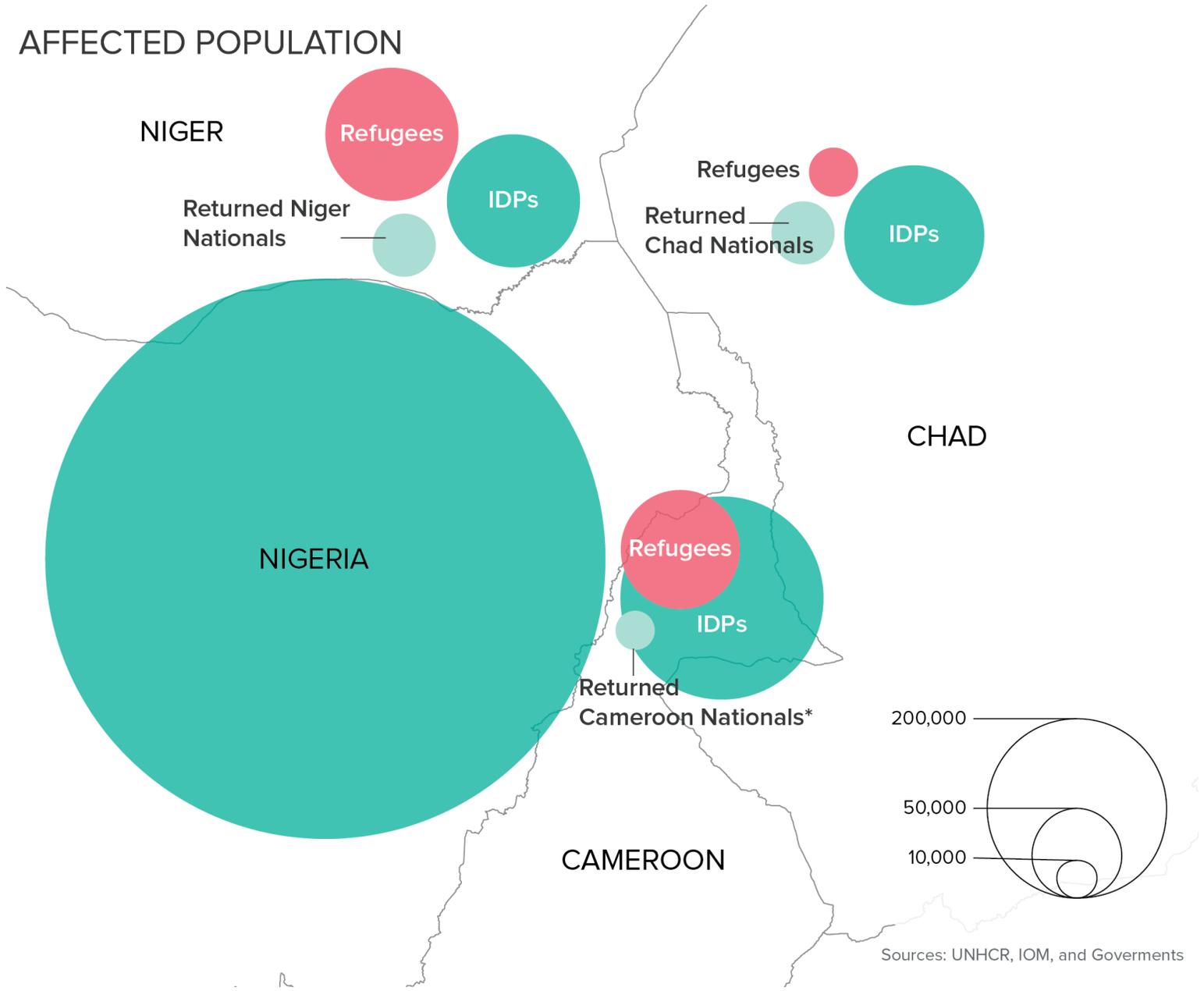
⁵ UNHCR Nigeria, the impact of the conflict on female-headed Households in the north-east, Protection Monitoring Thematic Report, June 2018.

⁶ OCHA 2019-2021 Nigeria Humanitarian Response Strategy, December 2018

OVERARCHING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1** All refugees, IDPs and returning nationals have enhanced access to protection.
- 2** Civil-military coordination is strengthened to maintain the civilian character of refugee and IDP hosting areas (including return areas).
- 3** Persons with specific protection risks are safe and receive appropriate preventive, responsive and restorative services.
- 4** Refugee, IDPs and returnees are assisted through a comprehensive solutions approach.
- 5** Refugees and other persons of concern receive documents and rights to nationality are upheld.

AFFECTED POPULATION



Sources: UNHCR, IOM, and Governments

Key protection concerns

Forced displacement and access to asylum and protection

Problem statement

The crisis continues to cause new displacement of refugees and IDPs. Security considerations should be addressed in a manner which also ensures access to protection by displaced persons.⁷ In all affected countries, concerns have been raised since the start of the crisis with regard to incidents and risk of *refoulement*, whether in the form of border closures, forced returns or induced returns.⁸

Dealing with the security threat in the context of asylum and internal protection requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach with proper security and protection safeguards built in. International and regional refugee instruments such as the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol and the 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa contain important limits and safeguards which could be greater utilized to ensure both security and protection. Though the right to seek asylum does not provide for exceptions, and it is widely accepted that the prohibition on *refoulement* binds all States as a matter of customary international law, the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention render the identification of persons engaged in terrorist activities possible and necessary, foresee their exclusion from status and do not shield them from prosecution. Moreover, the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) similarly requests States to ensure that internally displaced persons do not engage in subversive activities.

Security and protection are not mutually exclusive, and governments should be supported in ensuring that those forced to leave their homes due to persecution, conflict and insecurity have access to protection, while also preserving the integrity of asylum and protection channels. Specifically, an integrated response is needed that enables States to identify those entering and/or on their territory in a manner that responds to protection as well as

security concerns in line with their obligations under international and regional legal instruments.

The Kampala Convention provides an important regional legal framework for the protection of IDPs. As of January 2019, Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon are all Parties to the Convention. In Cameroon, a draft law is being developed and is pending adoption, whereas the National Assembly of Niger adopted the National Law on protection and assistance to IDPs on 3 December 2018.⁹

Particular attention should be paid to ensuring access to asylum by refugees living in highly insecure border areas where humanitarian and civilian government access is limited and border and protection monitoring a challenge. Humanitarian actors have observed that out-of-camp refugees are considered by some governments not to be asylum-seekers or refugees, and more generally that refugees and IDPs tend to be increasingly associated with security risks, which may lead governments to impose restrictive measures, such as incarceration or other deprivation of rights, or in some cases even *refoulement*.

Chad, Cameroon and Niger are also home to a number of Nigerian migrants, many of whom have been residing abroad for decades and may lack documentation. Due to the crisis, some may have become refugees *sur place* and must also be given the opportunity to seek and to enjoy asylum.

UNHCR continues to call on neighboring countries to keep their borders open and to allow access to territory and asylum procedures by persons fleeing the crisis in search of safety, as well as to suspend forcible returns of nationals or habitual residents to north-eastern Nigeria, including those who's asylum claim have been rejected, until the security and human rights situation has improved considerably.¹⁰

Ongoing hostilities and security measures in some areas of North East Nigeria prevent 0.8M people from having access to humanitarian assistance.

⁷ UNHCR, Security and refugee protection are complementary, 5.4.2017

⁸ See e.g. UNHCR, UNHCR alarmed by continuing forced returns of Nigerians by Cameroon, 20 April 2018

⁹ UNHCR Press Release, Niger becomes the first country in Africa to adopt a national law for the protection and assistance of Internally Displaced Persons, 5 December 2018

¹⁰ UNHCR, 2019-2020 Nigeria Regional Refugee Response Plan, p. 46

Objectives

1. Refugees have effective access to asylum and protection from *refoulement*.
2. Compliance with Human Rights Law, International Humanitarian Law and Refugee Law, as well as other applicable regional legal frameworks, is reinforced.
3. Governments are supported in ensuring an appropriate balance between security and border management and the respect for the right to seek and enjoy asylum and access protection, recognising the primacy of human rights in the implementation of security measures.
4. Freedom of movement of affected population is reinforced and restoration of family links is enhanced.
5. National legal and policy frameworks relating to the protection of refugees and IDPs are applied and the domestication of the Kampala Convention is expedited.
6. The re-establishment of civil authorities and of basic services in conflict affected areas is accelerated.
7. Coordination and information sharing among humanitarian actors and with national and local authorities in countries and across the region is reinforced.
8. Humanitarian access to affected population living in areas under NSAG's control is pursued.

Protection priorities

1. Support compliance with international standards and legal frameworks in the implementation of security measures, including restrictions on freedom of movement and daily activities, screening processes, as well as in relocating people in order to ensure their safety, including during military operations.
2. Enhance the understanding, application and implementation of safeguards of refugee and IDP protection as outlined in relevant international legal instruments and ensure that refugees have effective access to asylum and protection from *refoulement* in the context of ongoing instability and the presence of armed and terrorist elements.
3. Strengthen awareness among all relevant stakeholders - both humanitarian and government actors - on key international protection and human rights standards, in particular the right of asylum and the limits and safeguards of refugee and IDP protection.
4. Assist states in their efforts to domesticate and implement the Kampala Convention, including the development or revision of national legal and policy frameworks on internal displacement.

Response strategy

Humanitarian actors will continue **strengthening and establishing appropriate mechanisms and preventive measures** to support affected population to seek protection. This entails protection monitoring, including community-based monitoring; joint screening of new arrivals with government actors; pre-registration, including in transit centres; registration of people in detention and other measures, conducted in an age and gender-sensitive manner.

Border monitoring and protection monitoring will continue and be enhanced to collect information on the routes refugees have taken to enter countries of asylum, obstacles faced both en route and in seeking access to territory as well as on the voluntariness of return movements. Data collection of tracking movement will be enhanced through close collaboration among humanitarian organisations avoiding duplications, waste of resources and process fatigue to displaced population

The **re-establishment of civil authorities** and of **basic services** in conflict affected areas will be accelerated, and humanitarian actors will further engage with Governments, local civil society and other stakeholders to strengthen their role for the protection of and accountability towards the affected populations.

They will also ensure **advocacy, awareness-raising and capacity building** for relevant stakeholders, such as border and defence officials, joint committees and other government representatives, as well as traditional leaders, on **key international protection and human rights standards** such as the principle of *non-refoulement*. Focus will also be placed on the limits and safeguards of refugee and IDP protection and governments supported in their effective implementation, including for example the application of the exclusion clauses. Particular attention will be paid to clarify and promote use of appropriate terminology and enhanced understanding of key concepts.

Humanitarian actors will also **support Governments in their efforts to domesticate and implement the Kampala Convention**. Advocacy will be conducted to promote, as applicable in each country context, the domestication and implementation of the Kampala convention. Advocacy strategies will be developed or strengthened. Humanitarian actors will assist states in the development or revision of national legal and policy frameworks on internal displacement.

Civil-military coordination and the civilian character of refugee and IDP hosting areas

Problem statement

Widespread insecurity throughout the Lake Chad Basin and the threat of attacks pose security and protection risks for all civilians, including refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities. These include both the threat of infiltration by armed elements in refugee and IDP hosting areas as well as physical attacks on civilians.

NSAG's attacks on civilians continue in north-eastern Nigeria and areas affected by the conflict in Chad, Cameroon and Niger. Civilians are at risk of targeted and indiscriminate armed attacks, abductions and forced recruitment.

In January 2019, a wave of attacks by NSAG forcibly displaced over 35,000 persons who fled the Nigerian town of Rann to seek protection in the Far North Region of Cameroon and who are now facing acute humanitarian needs and uninformed return.¹¹

A similar situation was observed during May 2019 in the Zamfara State in North West Nigeria, with the displacement of more than 20,000 people to the region of Maradi, Niger.

Under international law, authorities at all levels of government hold the primary obligation and responsibility to respect, protect, ensure the wellbeing and fulfil the rights of persons on their

territory or under their jurisdiction. In doing so, it is recognized that specific challenges can arise in refugee and IDP hosting areas, where humanitarian actors themselves can face difficulties due to insecurity in accessing crisis-affected groups.

Maintaining the civilian character of refugee and IDP hosting areas is an important protection standard, with broad implications on other protection issues, such as physical protection from sexual and gender-based violence, protection from forced and child recruitment and access to assistance. A deteriorating security situation in areas where refugees and IDPs seek refuge can furthermore affect overall conditions for host communities. The response from the authorities may therefore be to restrict access to asylum, resort to arbitrary detention or even *refoulement*.

Preventive and security measures to ensure the civilian character of camps have included screening mechanisms and transit centres for new arrivals. For example in Cameroon, refugees are encouraged to move to a transit centre for improved security screening and registration before relocating to Minawao camp.

While the identification, disarmament and separation

¹¹ UNHCR, Nigerian refugees struggle in aftermath of Boko Haram attacks, 11 February 2019

of armed elements is the responsibility of the State, humanitarian actors can, subject to capacity, mandates, and security considerations, support States through guidance, principled advocacy and inter-agency mobilization, as well as technical assistance.

Risks are also posed by the presence of mines and unexploded improvised devices in all affected countries.

Ongoing hostilities have in turn resulted in the emergence of self-defence and vigilante groups¹², who also commit violations against civilians, including child recruitment and GBV. Meanwhile, many IDP sites as well as return areas in Nigeria are managed by military, rather than civilian authorities,

and protection monitoring activities report cases of military forces restricting IDPs movement even in/out of IDP camps, harassment of IDPs and sexual exploitation and abuse. Those new arrivals to military managed IDP camps who are kept in detention are not allowed to be registered by humanitarian or civil authorities increasing the risk of forced disappearance.

Due to insecurity, humanitarian and sometimes civilian government actors have limited access to certain zones, particularly in border areas. Close and strengthened civil-military coordination is necessary to ensure provision of assistance and protection to these most vulnerable populations.

Objectives

1. The civilian and humanitarian character of refugee and IDP hosting areas, including return areas, is reinforced.
2. Close cooperation mechanisms are established or strengthened with relevant Government actors, including military, to ensure security screening complies with international standards, including registration in detention facilities and the respect of the right to access asylum.
3. Civil-military coordination is strengthened at all levels to ensure an appropriate distinction between the roles of humanitarian actors and security forces, to enable humanitarian actors to reach people in need of assistance in difficult to reach areas and in detention conditions, as well as to ensure compliance with international standards on release and integrations of children associated with armed groups.
4. The protection risks associated to the practice of military screening in IDP camps is mitigated.

Protection priorities

1. Reinforce the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee and IDP hosting areas, promoting close collaboration between administrative authorities, security and police forces, humanitarian actors and the affected populations.
2. Promote the complying of military screening and detention measures with international standards and humanitarian access to persons held in military detention.
3. Establish the necessary inter-agency mechanisms to ensure high level standards of accountability for human rights violations against affected populations, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) , Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).
4. Support governments and enhance principled advocacy to address impunity including by ensuring access to justice, detention monitoring and building synergies between the protocols of humanitarian and military actors for the investigation of these violations.
5. Strengthen civil-military coordination at all levels and organize capacity building on international human rights and humanitarian law, and civil-military guidelines.

¹² UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, compilation on Nigeria, 27 August 2018, A/HRC/WG.6/31/NGA/2

Response strategy

Humanitarian actors will **guard the compliance of international standards on governments' security measures** and the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee and IDP hosting areas will be reinforced. Support will be provided through training and sensitisation of military and security forces on humanitarian principles, international law, the Kampala Convention and the OAU Convention. In addition, humanitarian actors will advocate for an increased accountability for human rights violations against affected populations, for human right derogations to be proportional and for the integration of female military and police personnel in the affected areas.

Awareness raising with refugee, IDP and host populations will be conducted on their obligations and the importance of maintaining the civilian character of refugee and IDP hosting areas. Mine risk education will be promoted for affected populations.

Coordination and collaboration among humanitarian actors will be strengthened on the civilian character of refugee and IDP hosting areas, for example by defining possible roles (within existing mandates), or the establishment of a task force or mechanism within the frame of existing protection coordination structures. Special efforts will be done on setting up inter-agency complaint mechanisms to reinforce accountability to affected populations.

Humanitarian actors will also **promote and advocate for the identification and separation of armed elements in accordance with international standards**. This includes advocacy with the Government for the adequate management of individuals posing a threat to the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum through the strengthening of such measures as (i) identification, separation and internment of fighters/combatants, and (ii) possible refugee status determination for those determined to have genuinely and permanently renounced military activities.

Capacity building will be organized for security forces, including police and camp-based security personnel including CJTF and other vigilante groups, the MNJTF and local authorities on key international protection, refugee, humanitarian and human rights standards to maintain the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee and IDP sites. Humanitarian actors will also sensitize government and military actors on civil-military coordination to protect and promote humanitarian principles.

Civil-military coordination mechanisms will be strengthened. For areas where humanitarian and civilian government actors have limited access due to insecurity, humanitarian actors may support Government and military actors- where appropriate- to develop guidance procedures aimed at promoting access by civilians to services and the engagement of humanitarian and protection actors. Civil-military coordination mechanisms will be also used to advocate for humanitarian access to hard to reach areas, compliance with IHL by military forces and freedom of movement of affected populations.

Humanitarian actors will continue working with Governments through **enhanced civil-military coordination to enable humanitarian actors to reach people in need of assistance in isolated areas**, and ensure an **appropriate distinction between the roles of humanitarian actors and security forces** is drawn.

Humanitarian actors will support the enhancement of cross-border cooperation, analysis and information exchange on security, civil-military coordination and protection issue.

Registration, documentation and addressing nationality issues in crises

Problem statement

Lack of civil documentation and hence difficulties in proving nationality is widespread in areas of the Lake Chad Basin most affected by the current crisis. For example in Niger, in the period 2016-2018, UNHCR identified 23,530 undocumented children born in displacement amongst the refugee, IDPs and returnee populations in the Diffa region.¹³

This phenomenon is largely linked to the region's **low rate of civil registration, including birth registration**. In Chad, only 12 per cent of births are registered, as compared to 30 per cent in Nigeria, 64 per cent in Niger and 66 per cent in Cameroon.¹⁴ Onerous administrative requirements, cumbersome procedures and/or the absence of accessible civil registry offices are key obstacles. There is also limited public awareness, including among displaced populations, of the importance of civil registration and associated procedures.

Persons who lack civil documents are often more prone to protection risks, such as limitations on freedom of movement and access to basic rights and services like education and health care. Lack of birth registration also makes it difficult to determine the exact age of children for purposes of legal protection.

A mosaic of communities live in the Lake Chad Basin, many of which share cross-border ethnolinguistic and cultural ties, and the region has a long history of cross-border movements and migration. In the context of mixed displacement, lack of civil documentation has sometimes made it difficult to determine whether people are refugees, nationals of the host country or third country nationals, and in the longer term, this may hamper the achievement of solutions for those who are displaced.

Lack of civil registration and documentation can also pose a **risk of statelessness**, especially in the context of displacement. Gaps in existing nationality laws and policies, in particular the lack of safeguards

to ensure that all children acquire a nationality at birth, further contribute to this risk. Significant progress has been made in recent years in the fight against statelessness, which is a pervasive issue throughout West and Central Africa region. In 2015, Niger and Nigeria signed the Abidjan Declaration of Ministers of ECOWAS Member States on Eradication of Statelessness¹⁵, and in 2016 both countries drafted national action plans to end statelessness. Yet important challenges remain.

Alongside efforts to strengthen civil registration for all affected populations, there is a need to ensure the **continuous registration of asylum-seekers and refugees and the issuance of appropriate documentation**, which typically takes the form of a refugee identity card. High levels of insecurity have impeded the registration of refugees living outside camps in some zones, and continued efforts to reach these populations are needed.

Registration of asylum seekers, refugees and IDPs is an essential protection tool. Not only can it enable access to related rights and local services, but it also helps mitigate the risk of statelessness and may be used to identify persons with specific needs for a more comprehensive and well-informed humanitarian response. In the current context where refugees risk being associated with NSAG, the issuance of refugee identity cards is also an important measure to help ensure their safety.

Biometrics is also becoming the norm in West and Central Africa, and Governments should be supported in launching or implementing biometric registration for refugees.

In view of the foregoing, support to Governments in improving civil registration and access to documentation, including birth certificates, for their own nationals as well as for refugees, IDPs and asylum seekers, is necessary. Continuous

¹³ UNHCR Niger: Statelessness Highlights in Niger, March 2019

¹⁴ UNICEF, The State of the World's Children 2017: Children in a Digital World

¹⁵ Abidjan Declaration of Ministers of ECOWAS Member States on Eradication of Statelessness, 25 Feb 2015.

registration of refugees, IDPs and asylum-seekers, in particular those living outside camps, issuance of appropriate documentation and close monitoring of

population movements should continue.

Objectives

1. Access to civil registration and documentation is enhanced, in particular to birth certificates.
2. The risk of statelessness is reduced among the conflict affected populations.
3. Governments are supported in ensuring all refugees are individually registered and receive appropriate documentation, as quickly as possible, in order to prevent discrimination against asylum-seekers and refugees. Registration of IDPs will be supported when necessary.
4. Inter-agency collaboration among humanitarian organisations carrying out registration will be strongly reinforced to ensure effective population tracking movement across the region, efficient use of funds and to avoid beneficiaries' process fatigue.

Protection priorities

1. Support affected population to have access to civil registration, increase awareness among affected populations on the importance of civil registration and promote the registration of all births on the territory.
2. Advocate with governments for the ratification or domestication of the Statelessness Conventions, including through the provision of support for the adoption or amendment of relevant legislation to prevent and reduce statelessness and of national plans to eradicate statelessness.
3. Ensure the registration of all refugees living outside camps, and strengthen mechanisms for the identification and registration of refugees and asylum-seekers in mixed flows.

Response Strategy

To **increase access to civil registration and documentation**, humanitarian actors will work with governments and local authorities to simplify civil registration procedures, address administrative hurdles and increase capacity. They will support the integration of birth registration into other sectors, such as education and health and advocate to ensure non-discriminatory access by refugee, migrant and IDP populations. The inclusion of documentation and nationality issues in development planning will be promoted to help ensure access in the future to durable solutions.

They will also **support governments in ensuring national laws and policies comply with existing relevant international and regional standards**, for example as defined in the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on Statelessness and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and to support the adoption of a Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the right to nationality and the eradication of statelessness. Niger and Nigeria will be supported in fulfilling their commitments under the Abidjan Declaration on the Eradication of Statelessness of 2015.

Awareness raising campaigns will be conducted among affected populations on the importance of civil registration and risks of statelessness, and traditional authorities involved in opposing ritual practices that might undermine the registration process. Collaboration with Civil Society Organisations will be strengthened to provide fulsome information campaigns and legal aid. National and local authorities as well as humanitarian actors will also be sensitized on the risk of statelessness and the link with security. Exchange of good practices will be encouraged in addressing issues of nationality and statelessness in crisis situations.

Governments will be supported through the provision of capacity building, in the aim of implementing a strategic transfer of competencies and strengthen their expertise in registration and refugee status determination. Support will be given to Governments to restore civil documentation for IDPs to promote protection and search for durable solutions. Particular attention will also be paid to strengthening mechanisms for the identification and registration of refugees and asylum-seekers in mixed flows. Registration will be used as a protection tool, for example for the

early identification of persons with specific needs or persons at risk of statelessness.

Governments will also continue to be supported to ensure that all refugees are biometrically registered and verified, and that appropriate documentation is provided.

Humanitarian organisations carrying out registration exercises around the sub-region will be encouraged to sign a strong Memorandum of Understanding to enhance information-sharing, triangulation of data, and comprehensive inter-agency analysis.

Upholding human rights in the context of security measures

Problem statement

States of emergency are ongoing in north-eastern Nigeria, Niger's Diffa region, Chad's Lake Region and in Cameroon,¹⁶ and countries have adopted or amended counter-terrorism legislation.

In the case of Chad, counter-terrorism legislation rehabilitates the death penalty and contains provisions that do not fully respect the right to a fair trial. During its dialogue with the Human Rights Council in November 2018 as part of the Universal Periodic Review, The Government of Chad reiterated its commitment to revise its anti-terrorism legislation to remove the provisions on death punishment. This law reform is ongoing.

Military operations were scaled up in 2016 and continue in all affected countries. Security measures at local and provincial levels have included curfews, motorcycle bans, limitations on movement and various livelihood activities.

While recognizing the legitimate national security concerns of states affected by the conflict in the context of ongoing insecurity, and the need to implement security measures, some of which may affect refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs and other persons of concern, such measures must be implemented in accordance with international standards and obligations.

Of particular concern are reports of excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests as well as deaths and inhumane treatment of civilian detainees, including children, suspected of collaborating with NSAG.¹⁷ Fair trial and due process issues, including with use of military tribunals, are reported in all countries with respect to persons suspected of being associated with NSAG.¹⁸ Other measures have included restrictions on freedom of movement.¹⁹

Humanitarian actors have observed that refugees and IDPs tend to be increasingly associated with security risks, which may lead governments to impose restrictive measures.

States may, under certain circumstances, need to restrict the freedom of movement and other rights of their population for specific security reasons. However, declarations of a state of emergency and/or passage of specific emergency legislation and the exclusive use of military courts can perpetuate irregular and excessive action under the guise of legality. Human Rights prevail also in contexts of conflict while some derogation may apply if truly necessary and proportional to the crisis.

States have the primary responsibility and duty to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons within their jurisdiction. This includes taking measures to

¹⁶ States of Emergency were first declared in north-eastern Nigeria in May 2013, in Chad in November 2015, and in Niger in early 2015.

¹⁷ See generally, e.g., UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, compilation on Nigeria, 27 August 2018, A/HRC/WG.6/31/NGA/2, paras. B1; Human Rights Watch, World Report 2019: Events of 2015, January 2019; Amnesty International, Nigeria: still no accountability for human rights violations - Amnesty international submission for the universal periodic Review, 31st session of the UPR working group, November 2018

¹⁸ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, compilation on Nigeria, 27 August 2018, A/HRC/WG.6/31/NGA/2, paras. B1; , Protection Sector Working Group Nigeria, Access to Justice: best practices in North-East Nigeria, August 2018

¹⁹ See e.g. PSWG Nigeria: Participatory Protection Assessment Report Adamawa State, Nigeria, 2018; UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons on her mission to the Niger, 9 May 2018, p. 9.Oct 2018;

prevent the commission of offences, investigating human rights abuses and prosecuting those found responsible, as well as providing adequate and effective remedies. Lack of accountability and recourse to justice may have broader implications on the achievement of durable security in the region.

At the Second Regional Protection Dialogue in January 2019, the Governments of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria renewed their commitments to “*tak[ing] concrete steps, including continuous monitoring, to ensure that security measures such as*

restrictions on freedom of movement in the context of state of emergency and evacuations comply with international standards, and are temporary and exceptional in nature.”²⁰ In doing so, they reaffirmed their recognition of the primacy of human rights in the implementation of security measures²¹

Humanitarian and human rights actors should work constructively with governments to ensure respect for the fundamental rights of the affected populations.

Objectives

1. The fundamental rights of refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, returnees and other persons of concern are respected.
2. Security measures comply with the relevant provisions of international law, notably international human rights law, refugee law and humanitarian law.
3. Survivors of rights violations have access to justice and an adequate and effective remedy under domestic law.
4. Sexual violence is considered as crime by applicable legal frameworks (i.e. Terrorism laws).

Protection priorities

1. Support refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, victims of abuses by non-state actors, returnees and other persons of concern to uphold their fundamental rights, in particular protection from arbitrary detention and undue restrictions on freedom of movement.
2. In collaboration with national partners, establish an effective referral system for victims of abuses and violations of human rights.
3. Work with governments and relevant judiciaries to ensure that those detained for alleged association with NSAG have access to justice, with a particular focus on children involved in such procedures. This includes, but not only, provision of legal aid, training and capacity building and targeted advocacy for children and other survivors to be treated as victims instead of affiliates or intelligence assets.
4. Strengthen awareness of security forces and other government actors on key international humanitarian standards and human rights through training and capacity building.
5. Continue supporting human right monitoring mechanisms such as MRM.
6. Strengthen internal accountability mechanisms of security forces.

Response Strategy

Humanitarian and human rights actors will work with Governments to ensure **national laws and policies** comply with relevant international and regional standards, conduct **targeted advocacy**, engage in **greater coordination** on issues of human rights violations in the context of security measures, and promote the stronger engagement and presence of key local and international actors.

There is need to **monitor the legality and reasonability of security and counter-insurgency measures** implemented by Governments and which affect refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs and other persons of concern.

²⁰ Regional Protection Dialogue on the Lake Chad Basin, Abuja Action Statement, 8 June 2016.

²¹ Second Regional Protection Dialogue on the Lake Chad Basin, Reaffirmation of the Commitments of the Abuja Action Statement and their Implementation, 28-29 January 2019

Without interfering in the due process of judicial proceedings, humanitarian and human rights actors have an important role in monitoring such proceedings, especially when there are risks that fundamental rights will not be respected. Where appropriate, an alert system may be established with possibly a hotline, in coordination with relevant agencies. Strong advocacy will be upheld for the release of the conclusion of the Special Investigation Panel to Review Compliance of the Armed Forces with Human Rights Obligations and Rules of Engagement.

Humanitarian actors will strengthen **awareness raising** among government and security forces on key international humanitarian standards and human rights. Capacity building will be conducted with relevant stakeholders, such as security forces and judges, on the rights of refugees, IDPs and related human rights.

Humanitarian actors will support people in detention to **ensure that any detention measures taken comply with international standards**, in particular that the detention is necessary, proportionate to the threat, non-discriminatory, and subject to judicial oversight and due process safeguards. Responses will include detention monitoring, provision of legal assistance to detainees, capacity building of legal service providers and national and local authorities, including judges, support to screening and profiling measures, and support for the reintegration of detainees into their community after being released. The immediate release of children from detention and their placement in other forms of appropriate accommodation will be promoted.

Collaboration between humanitarian actors and Governments will be strengthened to **ensure prompt identification of asylum-seekers and refugees among persons held in detention**, and their access to asylum procedures, legal assistance and protection from *refoulement*. If an asylum-seeker is wanted by national courts in the country of asylum, the examination of the claim could be deferred pending the completion of criminal procedures.²² In cases involving an extradition request from the country of origin, asylum and extradition procedures may be conducted in parallel but the determination of the refugee claim needs to precede the decision on extradition.²³

²² See e.g. UNHCR, Addressing Security Concerns without Undermining Refugee Protection - UNHCR's Perspective, Rev.2, para. 14, 17 December 2015

²³Ibid.

Alternatives to camps and relocation

Problem Statement

In the Lake Chad Basin, the majority of displaced persons live outside formal camps and in host communities. Overall, an estimated 62 per cent of refugees and 71 per cent of IDPs live outside formal camps.²⁴

Enabling refugees and IDPs to live in host communities supports their ability to better exercise their rights and freedoms, make meaningful choices about their lives, contribute to their community and live with greater dignity and independence.²⁵

Yet in the context of the Lake Chad Basin, the challenges are many to ensuring refugees and IDPs living outside camps²⁶ are protected and assisted effectively and enabled to achieve solutions. Security and access issues are key concerns in all countries, particularly in border communities.

In Niger's Diffa region, displaced persons have settled in hundreds of spontaneous settlements, many scattered along Route Nationale 1. Displaced persons living in host communities are sometimes less visible or may be more difficult to reach. In Nigeria, the sheer number of IDPs living in host communities has also rendered the response difficult.

In the context of ongoing instability and presence of armed elements, camps have in some instances provides a better means of ensuring the physical

security of refugees and IDPs and provision of assistance. Governments have also sometimes insisted upon the establishment of camps for reasons of public order or security.

For example, due to security measures imposed by the Government of Cameroon in the Far North in July 2015, Nigerian refugees living in border areas continue to seek accommodation in Minawao camp, as the camp is considered to be safer.

Nevertheless, important steps have been taken toward enabling refugees to live in host communities. In all affected countries, efforts are underway to develop and strengthen response such as site management approaches for displaced persons living outside camps. In 2016, the Chadian Government, in close collaboration with humanitarian actors, decided to drop its initial plan to relocate Dar Es Salam Refugee camp and allowed refugees to settle in host communities such as Ngouboua and Tchoukoutalia.

There may also be situations in which States need to relocate people in order to ensure their safety, including during military operations.

Humanitarian actors have an important role to play in ensuring humanitarian evacuations and relocation is conducted in accordance with international standards.

Objectives

1. Ensure refugees and IDPs living outside camps, in particular those who may be less visible and in hard to reach areas, receive appropriate protection and assistance.
2. Where needed for protection and security reasons, support the evacuation or relocation, on a voluntary and informed basis, of refugees and IDPs away from insecure areas. Secondary displacement will be avoided.

²⁴ Cameroon: UNHCR--statistics on people of concern, January 2019 and IOM, DTM Report, Cameroon, Far North, Round 17 | 1, February 2019 (56,569 refugees in camps; 79,830 refugees outside camp; 100% IDPs outside camps; Nigeria: IOM, DTM Report, round 26, January 2019 (40% of IDPs in camps/camp like settings; 60% of IDPs are outside camps); Chad: IOM DTM Report round 6, January 2019 and UNHCR Chad Refugee Response Plan 2019-2020 (77% of IDPs in camps, 23% outside of camps; 70% of Nigerian refugees living in Dar Es Salam camp); Niger: REACH, Profile of the Sayam Forage camp (11% of refugees living in the camp).

²⁵ See generally, UNHCR, UNHCR Policy on Alternatives to Camps, 22 July 2014, UNHCR/HCP/2014/9. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement state that 'every IDP has the right to liberty of

movement and freedom to choose his or her residence' and should therefore receive equal treatment wherever they choose to live.

Guiding Principle 14, <http://www.idpguidingprinciples.org/>

²⁶ UNHCR's Alternatives to Camps Policy defines a camp as any purpose-built, planned and managed location or spontaneous settlement where refugees are accommodated and receive assistance and services from government and humanitarian agencies. UNHCR, UNHCR Policy on Alternatives to Camps, 22 July 2014, UNHCR/HCP/2014/9, p. 12.

3. When conditions permit and after comprehensive consultation with affected population, phase out established camps and support the gradual integration of refugees and IDPs into host communities. Other durable solutions will be also explored.

Protection priorities

1. Strengthen identification, profiling and provision of protection and assistance to refugees and IDPs living outside camps, paying particular attention to those who may be less visible and in hard to reach areas.
2. Promote compliance of international standards when humanitarian evacuations or relocation measures organized by governments are implemented.
3. Promote durable solution to displaced people, for instance the gradual integration of refugees and IDPs living in camps into host communities while maintaining assistance and protection in sites for those in need.

Response Strategy

Humanitarian actors will continue **seeking to enhance provision of protection and assistance to refugees and IDPs outside camps**, including through the development and strengthening of response and site management approaches for out-of-camp populations. New approaches may be explored, and exceptionally used in situations with extremely limiting access such as remote and mobile management. In addition, responses will continue targeting host communities to strengthen their resilience and capacity to continue hosting refugees and IDPs as well as to maintain peaceful co-existence.

Identification and profiling of IDPs and refugees living in host communities will continue or be strengthened through inter-agency coordination and advocacy will be conducted with Governments to strengthen the response for displaced persons living out of camps and ensure access to available local services. Particular attention will be paid to displaced persons who may be less 'visible' or in hard to reach areas. Regarding refugees and IDPs living in areas where access is limited, humanitarian actors will advocate for strengthened protection support and assistance.

In the context of ongoing instability and presence of armed elements, **camps and sites will continue to be used where they provide a better means of ensuring the physical security of refugees and IDPs and provision of assistance and accordance with Government policies**. Where camps are used, humanitarian actors will pursue the progressive removal of restrictions on the ability of refugees and IDPs to exercise their rights and seek to build linkages between the camp and host communities and anchor the camp within the local economy, infrastructure and national social protection and service delivery systems.

Humanitarian actors will **promote- when conditions permit- the gradual phase-out of camps and integration of refugees and IDPs into host communities** and seek to ensure that camps are used exceptionally and as a temporary measure. The feasibility of camp phase-out and gradual integration of displaced persons into host communities will continue to be monitored and assessed. National and local authorities as well as humanitarian actors will be sensitized on alternatives to camps policy in order to enable well-informed and appropriate decision-making.

Participation of the affected populations in planning and decision-making will be ensured.

Humanitarian actors will **support Governments to ensure humanitarian evacuations and relocations are conducted in accordance with international standards**, for example through support in the planning process, the development of targeting recommendations and sharing of guidance and expertise. Strong advocacy will be carried out for those attempts against humanitarian principles. As appropriate, humanitarian actors may participate in humanitarian evacuations and otherwise support persons in need of relocation or evacuation, including through provision of protection and other assistance to those who may choose not to relocate. Push and pull factors will be rigorously analysed.

Persons with specific protection needs

Problem statement

Conflict and displacement affect individuals differently, depending on their age, gender, diversity²⁷ and other factors. Some refugees and IDPs face heightened protection risks because they have specific needs, and these must be identified and addressed promptly, as well as integrated into all areas of response.

The crisis has seriously impacted the most vulnerable refugees and IDPs, particularly children at risk,²⁸ including unaccompanied and separated children, women at risk, older persons, and persons with disabilities and serious health conditions. The number of child- and women-headed households is also on the increase because male heads of households have either been disappeared, detained, killed or fear to return to join their families. These phenomena underline the specific protection risks faced by men especially young adults and the burden and vulnerability experienced by women without them.

Violence against women and children including sexual and gender based violence (SGBV)²⁹ and exposure to trafficking, are widespread, but underreported. Of the women and girls who were forced and abducted from their homes by the non-state armed groups, many are raped, forced into marriages and forced labour, some kept as sex slaves, exposed to sexually transmitted diseases and often impregnated by their captures,³⁰ and many persons have suffered the trauma of violent experiences.

Persons released from NSAG captivity have very particular psycho-social needs and may face difficulties in the longer-term with regard to reintegration into the community. These protection concerns are further compounded by the difficult living conditions and poor access to basic and essential services, resulting in some negative coping mechanisms.

Objectives

1. Persons with specific protection risks are safe and receive appropriate preventive, responsive and restorative services.
2. Displaced persons enjoy their rights on an equal footing, taking into account age, gender and diversity.
3. Meaningful access to humanitarian assistance is ensured.

Protection priorities

1. Strengthen identification, tracking, referral and response mechanisms for persons with specific needs and vulnerabilities and enhance coordination among humanitarian actors to minimize duplication of efforts.
2. Facilitate access, protection and accountability to persons and groups with specific needs, including accessibility to essential services for those in hard to reach areas
3. Promote a standard and harmonized procedure across the 4 countries for multi-sectoral needs assessments and improved registration and profiling that ensures adequate data protection.
4. Work with all actors to ensure that humanitarian services are provided in accordance with gender, age and diversity, and that local communities participate to the planning and implementation of projects.

²⁷ For further information, see UNHCR, [Age, Gender and Diversity Policy](#), 8 June 2011.

²⁸ See Section VII: Child Protection

²⁹ See Section VIII: SGBV.

³⁰ Nigeria HRP 2019 to 2021

5. Promote the adoption of specific provisions for the demobilisation and reintegration of individuals leaving armed groups and their households, with a specific focus on children and forced married women.

Response strategy

Identification, documentation and tracking of persons with specific needs will be strengthened, for example through protection monitoring and vulnerability screening activities, particularly in areas where humanitarian actors have limited access. In order to adhere to ethical standards, data collection will be only carried out when basic services are available locally and therefore responses to identified cases are ensured. Interoperable systems for information sharing such as PRIMERO will be explored and strong data protection systems will be ensured. Survivors of violence, protection of children at risk of recruitment and strengthened demobilization and reintegration of children associated with armed groups will be prioritised.

Partnerships with agencies and organisations with expertise, particularly in the provision of psycho-social support, will be enhanced, and humanitarian actors will work closely together to ensure a more coordinated response to persons with specific protection risks, including **strengthened referral mechanisms and provision of multi-sectoral assistance**.

Humanitarian actors will also conduct **awareness-raising campaigns with key stakeholders** on persons with specific protection risks and advocate for improved access to government services, including welfare provisions.

Humanitarian actors will also work to ensure that displaced persons enjoy their rights on an equal footing, taking into account age, gender and diversity, and are able to **participate fully in the decisions that affect their lives** and the lives of their family members and communities. To do so, humanitarian interventions will mainstreaming protection along all project cycle.

Child protection

Problem statement

The crisis has severely affected the protection and well-being of children and adolescents, who constitute around 60 per cent of the conflict-affected population.³¹

Children in regions where Boko Haram is operating remain at risk of recruitment, violence and exploitation. In Nigeria, since the beginning of the crisis, at least 49,500 girls and boys have been exposed to recruitment by armed groups and other grave child rights violations.³² The release and reintegration of children associated with armed elements must be ensured in accordance with international standards.

Boko Haram has directly targeted children as part of its insurgency strategy, including child recruitment and use in combat and support roles, destruction of schools, abduction of girls and boys and subjection of girls to forced marriage and rape. Almost half of all children casualties resulted from suicide attacks perpetrated by Boko Haram, including the use of children as carriers of person-borne improvised explosive devices, three quarters of which were girls.³³

This in turn has created an environment of suspicion in some communities toward children, and children released from Boko Haram captivity face numerous difficulties in their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. UNICEF describes how children born of sexual violence are perceived as having 'bad blood' and are at even greater risk of rejection, abandonment and violence.³⁴

In some countries, children may be detained on suspicion of being associated with the Boko Haram insurgency, where they are sometimes held alongside adults and at risk of psychological, physical and sexual abuse and other harms to their development.

Many families have been separated during displacement, and there are a high number of unaccompanied or separated children, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation. In north-eastern Nigeria, Borno State, ten per cent of displaced households in report having separated or unaccompanied children.³⁵ Family tracing and reunification has been a challenge in part because the low levels of documentation and birth registration make it difficult to establish family links.

Many refugee and IDP children have been exposed to traumatic events or high levels of daily stress, may be suffering from trauma and other mental health issues, and are in need of support. Yet child protection services in local communities are scarce and lack the capacity to address the needs.

Limited humanitarian assistance and livelihood opportunities have also contributed to an increased use of negative coping mechanisms involving children, such as the use of child labour and child begging³⁶ as well as sexual exploitation and forced marriage.³⁷

Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria are all among the twenty countries with the highest rates of child marriage in the world,³⁸ and humanitarian actors have observed an increase in early marriage among refugees and IDPs.

Both NSAGs, Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad, commonly known as Boko Haram, and the Civilian Joint Task Force in Nigeria have been included on the Secretary General's list of parties to conflict who commit grave violations against children.³⁹ Monitoring and reporting on incidents remains challenging due to the lack of access to affected areas in Nigeria and neighboring countries.

³¹OCHA, 2018 Revised Humanitarian Needs and Requirement Overview, September 2018 and Nigeria 2019-2021 Humanitarian Response Strategy, December 2018. (Cameroon: 56%; Chad: 57%; Nigeria: 4.2 million children, namely 60%)

³² OCHA, Nigeria 2019-2021 Humanitarian Response Strategy, p.9

³³ See e.g. UN Secretary-General (UNSG), Children and armed conflict : report of the Secretary-General, 16 May 2018, A/72/865-S/2018/465

³⁴ UNICEF & International Alert, Bad Blood: Perceptions of children born of conflict-related sexual violence and women and girls associated with Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria, Feb 2016.

³⁵ OCHA, Humanitarian Needs Overview 2019, p. 7

³⁶ See e.g. UNDP, Livelihoods and Economic Recovery Assessment 2016: North East Nigeria, May 2016, p. 10.

³⁷ See e.g. OCHA, Periodic Monitoring Report Nigeria, January-June 2018; Plan International, Adolescent Girls in Crisis: voices from the Lake Chad Basin, 2018

³⁸ UNICEF, The State of the World's Children 2017: Children in a Digital World

³⁹ UN Secretary-General (UNSG), Children and armed conflict : report of the Secretary-General, 16 May 2018, A/72/865-S/2018/465

Objectives

1. Girls and boys are safe where they live, learn and play.
2. Girls and boys have child-friendly access to asylum, refugee and other legal procedures as well as to essential documents.
3. Girls and boys with specific needs, including unaccompanied and separated children, are identified quickly and efficiently, and receive targeted support.
4. Children associated with armed groups are primarily treated as victims

Protection priorities

1. Ensure children at risk including survivors of grave human rights violations are identified quickly and efficiently and receive appropriate preventive, responsive and restorative services.
2. Strengthen child protection systems and community-based child protection mechanisms for displaced and conflict-affected children.
3. Strengthen monitoring and reporting on grave violations of children's rights, including child recruitment, abduction, and attacks on schools.
4. Mainstream child protection in all areas of the humanitarian response to the crisis.
5. Support cross-border tracing and reunification mechanisms for all separated and unaccompanied minors, including those leaving armed groups.
6. Support the implementation of Action Plans and Handover Protocols across the region for the release and integration of children associated with armed groups.

Response strategy

Humanitarian actors will continue to work to **prevent exploitation, violence and abuse of children and to ensure that children have access to the protection services and support they need.**

Mechanisms for the **identification and referral of children at risk as well as the response to the needs** of these children are in place, but need to be strengthened, in particular to ensure Best Interest Assessments and Determination and quality community-based child protection. With regard to unaccompanied and separated children, humanitarian actors will continue **family tracing and reunification** activities. Inter-agency coordination will be reinforced to ensure efficient referrals, data protection and stronger advocacy.

In response to the high numbers of children without documentation and at risk of statelessness, humanitarian actors will continue to **support access to birth certificates and other documentation**, and raise awareness among refugees and other key stakeholders about the importance of civil registration. Awareness raising on child protection issues will continue with key stakeholders.

They will also work to **strengthen monitoring and reporting on child protection issues and violations of children's rights**, including reporting on grave violations against children under the MRM.⁴⁰

Other targeted child-protection activities will include the **construction and maintenance of child-friendly spaces**, organization of age and gender appropriate activities and **improved access to psycho-social support and restorative services.**

⁴⁰The May 2018 Annual Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict identifies Boko Haram as a party that recruits and uses children, kills and maims children, and engages in attacks on schools and/or hospitals. Annex II of the Children and Armed Conflict Report of the Secretary-General, UN Doc. No. A/72/8655/2018/465, 16 May 2018.

Humanitarian actors will also advocate for the **release and reintegration of children associated with armed elements** in accordance with international standards, in particular the Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups and the handover protocol for children associated with armed groups.⁴¹

Sexual and gender based violence

Problem statement

SGBV is a core - though often hidden - dimension of the protection crisis in the Lake Chad Basin. The humanitarian response has lagged far behind the needs, and there is a need to increase preventive measures and ensure a holistic response to survivors.

Boko Haram tactics have included the abduction of women and girls primarily for sexual abuse, forced marriages and labour, and the kidnapping of boys to join as fighters.⁴² Women and girls are targeted for abduction and sexual abuse by NSAG as part of their financial calculus and self-perpetuation. Sexual violence has also been a recurrent feature of recruitment by terrorist groups, who may promise marriage and sexual slaves as forms of masculine domination and status to young men. Trials in Nigeria are proceeding mainly under the Terrorism Prevention Amendment Act (2013) which exclude all sexual crimes. In 2018, the Nigeria National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) constituted a Special Investigations Panel on Alleged Human Rights Violations in North East Nigeria (NHRC-SIP) and invited public submissions on allegations of human rights violations committed in North East Nigeria, including sexual violence against IDPs, lack of investigations, sexual exploitation of women and girls in exchange for food and security, and discrimination and violence against women and girls returning from Boko Haram captivity (pejoratively called “Boko Haram wives”). Findings of the Special Investigation Panel to Review Compliance of the Armed Forces

with Human Rights Obligations and Rules of Engagement established in August 2017 are not yet public⁴³.

At least 4,000 women and girls have reportedly been kidnapped in Nigeria since 2013, mainly for use as sex slaves and/or Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices.⁴⁴

Those who arrive to areas controlled by the government often face stigma and discrimination by their communities, and other barriers to reintegration.⁴⁵ Women and girls who were compelled to become wives of NSAG members, often referred to as “Boko Haram women” or “Sambisa women” face social marginalisation and are treated with suspicion that they may have been indoctrinated.⁴⁶

Among displaced communities, the risk of SGBV has increased with the breakdown of family and community structures, changes in social and gender roles or responsibilities and increased socio-economic vulnerability.

Humanitarian protection actors have observed a rise in harmful traditional practices, in particular forced and early marriage among displaced populations.

Niger has the highest rate of child marriage in the world, with 3 in 4 girls marrying before their 18th birthday. In the region of Niger most affected by the crisis, the rates are even higher – in Diffa 89% of girls marry as children.⁴⁷ While SGBV goes largely under-

⁴¹ The Paris Principles: The Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups, Feb 2007.

⁴² Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, UN Doc. No. S/2018/1065, 29 Nov 2018, p. 4; Amnesty International estimates that more than 2,000 women and girls were abducted by Boko Haram between 2009 and 2015, many of whom were forced into marriage with Boko Haram fighters. Amnesty International,

⁴³ Report of the UNSG on Conflict Related Sexual Violence. S/2019/280

⁴⁴ OCHA, 2019 Nigeria Humanitarian Needs Overview

⁴⁵ See e.g. Amnesty International, “They Betrayed Us”: Women Who Survived Boko Haram Raped, Starved and Detained in Nigeria’. London: Amnesty International, 2018.; International Crisis Group, Cameroon: Confronting Boko Haram, Report No. 241/Africa, p. 20

⁴⁶ See e.g. Report of the Special Rapporteurs on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences on their joint visit to Nigeria, UN Doc. No. A/HRC/32/32/Add.2, 16 June 2016, para. 41; International Crisis Group, Nigeria: Women and the Boko Haram Insurgency, Report No. 242/Africa, 5 Dec 2016, p. 15.

⁴⁷ Plan International, Adolescent Girls in Crisis: voices from the Lake Chad Basin, 2018

reported due to stigma and cultural taboos, there are reports of increased incidents among the displaced. In Nigeria, through a participatory protection assessments in the Adamawa State, women and girls reported being subjected to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) when conducting daily chores and activities, such as going to school, collecting water, and going to the farm. Men in the host communities, intimate partners, and security officials were identified as the primary perpetrators of SGBV.⁴⁸

Cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of IDP women and girls in exchange for food and their freedom of movement outside of IDP camps continue to be reported, members of National Security Forces also being reportedly implicated.⁴⁹ Many also reported cases of rape, sexual abuse and sexual harassment.⁵⁰

The Nigeria GBVIMS report for 2018 posits that sexual violence (Rape & Sexual Assault) was reported in 19% of reported GBV incidents between January and December. In this same time period, GBV incidents occurred in the context of sexual slavery in 10% of reported GBV incidents, suggesting that at least 36% of sexual violence

reported was perpetrated while the survivor was: being forcibly transported (trafficked); (forced conscription); and held against her/his will, abducted or kidnapped. Reports of GBV incidents occurring in the context of sexual slavery increased in the latter months of 2018.⁵¹

Further challenges are the prevalence of impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence in all affected countries and the need to strengthen legal frameworks and ensure access to justice. In Chad, SGBV tends to be resolved by traditional leaders without consideration for national laws punishing SGBV, and impunity prevails in most cases.⁵²

Survivors and people at risk face significant challenges in accessing services, such as legal aid medical and psychosocial support. The capacity of local communities remains weak to effectively prevent and respond to SGBV incidents, which partially are the consequence of rooted gender inequalities. Communities play a key role in identifying and responding to reintegration needs of survivors. Organisations and institutions capable of providing adequate support to survivors are also lacking.

Objectives

1. SGBV prevention is enhanced and the risks associated with GBV are reduced.
2. SGBV survivors, including men and boys, can confidentially report incidents and have timely and non-discriminatory access to services and support, including medical, psychosocial, legal and material assistance, as well as safe spaces where needed.
3. Support Access to Justice for SGBV survivors.
4. Women, adolescent girls, men and boys benefit from quality national systems for prevention of and response to SGBV.
5. Advocacy efforts and technical/material support against impunity is reinforced.
6. Humanitarian interventions are at standard level of “tolerance zero” to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Protection priorities

1. Strengthen SGBV prevention and response mechanisms, including referrals and multi-sectoral assistance.
2. Enhance training and awareness raising among key stakeholders, including relevant government institutions such as law enforcement agencies.

⁴⁸ PSWG Nigeria: Participatory Protection Assessment Report Adamawa State, Nigeria, 2018

⁴⁹ OCHA, 2019 Nigeria Humanitarian Needs Overview

⁵⁰ Ibid. See also Human Rights Watch, Nigeria: Officials Abusing Displaced Women, Girls, 31 Oct 2016.

⁵¹ Nigeria | Annual Report 2018 - Preventing and Responding to Gender Based Violence - Gender Based Violence Sub Sector

⁵² UNHCR, SGBV Strategy 2012-2016: Chad, p. 2

3. Improve the protection environment for women and girls through community-based protection measures.
4. Strengthen SGBV and TIP mainstreaming and ensure it is integrated in all aspects of humanitarian response.
5. Increase accountability for violations against affected populations such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), TIP and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

Response strategy

SGBV **prevention and response mechanisms** will be strengthened, including through enhanced provision of age and gender appropriate **multi-sectoral assistance** to SGBV survivors, such as medical assistance, psychosocial support, safety and legal aid. Referral mechanisms will be strengthened through regular update of the referral pathways as well as sensitization of service providers to ensure appropriate response upon SGBV disclosure. Safe spaces will be maintained or created both in camp and out of camp settings to enable women and adolescent girls to participate in skills building initiatives.

Humanitarian actors will work closely together to ensure a **more coordinated response** to SGBV across the relevant sectors, including by strengthening and improving the capacity of SGBV coordination bodies both at national, regional and field levels. Joint efforts will be pursued to, achieve joint commitment under the Call to Action initiative. All humanitarian interventions will become an entry point for reporting of cases through a survivor-centred joint inter-agency complaint mechanism.

Community-based protection mechanisms, in compliance with GBV guiding principles, will also be promoted and strengthened.

Focus will continue to be placed on **awareness raising and capacity building** of all relevant stakeholders, including national and local authorities, security forces, displaced and host communities. Where needed, relevant national and local authorities may be supported in developing or updating existing codes of conduct.

Humanitarian actors will invest in **supporting national systems for SGBV prevention and response**, based on country level analyses of the availability of these systems, access of women, girls, men and boys to these systems and their acceptability, affordability and quality. This includes support to bringing domestic laws and policies into compliance with international standards. In collaboration with government counterparts and other key stakeholders, technical and financial support will be provided to national and regional authorities to improve the quality of national SGBV prevention and response systems including through training and tools development. Advocacy will be conducted with authorities and key partners, to increase the non-discriminatory access of women, girls, men and boys to national SGBV prevention and response systems, through reforms in laws, policy, procedures and practices.

Humanitarian actors will seek to ensure that camp and camp-like settings are structured and managed to promote safety, dignity, including through safety audits, provision of lighting, WASH facilities that are safe and accessible, secure shelters that allow privacy and an adequate security presence. Strong measures will be in place to reduce the risk of SEA as transactional sex for assistance or freedom of movement. In non-camp settings, efforts will be made to reduce the risk of SGBV.

SGBV prevention will also include **efforts to empower women**, for example through enhanced self-reliance and livelihood opportunities and participation in governance structures that include women in decision making processes at camp level settings. Prevention measures challenging the gender norms leading to GBV will be reinforced through strong base and end lines to prove protection outcomes.

Humanitarian actors will also seek to **improve access to justice** so SGBV survivors can seek a judicial remedy based on consent. This may include provision of legal assistance and counselling. Advocacy will be conducted to develop or strengthen national legal and policy frameworks relating to SGBV and to bring them in accordance with international standards. Revision of national legal and policy frameworks will be focused to ensure that survivors of sexual violence committed by armed groups are recognized and supported as legitimate victims ensuring that survivors are not treated as affiliates or intelligence assets.

More generally, humanitarian actors will work to strengthen **SGBV mainstreaming** and ensure it is integrated in all aspects of the humanitarian response, as well as on increasing accountability to affected populations, including opportunities for participation and complaint mechanisms.

Education

Problem statement

It is estimated that almost one million children have been forced out of school by the ongoing conflict across the Lake Chad Basin. Schools, students and teachers have been deliberately targeted and attacked, leaving many families and communities afraid to send their children back to school. Since the conflict erupted in North-East Nigeria, 611 teachers have been killed, 19,000 teachers displaced, 910 schools damaged or destroyed, and more than 1,500 schools forced to close.⁵³

As of March 2019, the Lake Chad Basin counts 1.048 schools closed or non-functional due to the insecurity (934 in Nigeria, 68 in Cameroon, 42 in Niger, and 4 in Chad) with a total of 443.000 children and 5.000 teachers affected. In total, the region counts 5.7 million of children in need, including 3 million of school aged children in need of humanitarian assistance in education.⁵⁴

Additionally, the region of Maradi in Niger recently received an influx of Nigerian fleeing the violence in the region of Sokoto. Around 20.000 persons have arrived in Maradi, among which 75% are children in need of education.⁵⁵

Access to education is a basic human right, and also a fundamentally enabling right, providing essential knowledge and skills for protection, self-reliance and resilience, as well as for durable solutions.⁵⁶ As such during emergencies and displacement, education plays a critical role not only for the protection of children and young people, but as a measure of normalcy and stability as well as development for the community as a whole.

While children must get back to school, the safety of learning environments must be improved first as a priority. Advocacy for safe school environments at all

levels is a prerogative, particularly in areas which remain insecure, including zones recently under control of governments and possible areas of return. The 4 affected countries have endorsed the 2015 *Safe Schools Declaration*,⁵⁷ committing to take concrete action to protect students and their education in times of conflict, and endorsed the *Guidelines for protecting schools and universities from military use during armed conflict*.⁵⁸

A high number of conflict-affected children have never participated in formal education or experienced disruption in their education and are in need of remedial programmes. A 2015 study in Chad indicates that 81 per cent of children aged 6 to 11 years surveyed had never been enrolled in school or attended Koranic school.⁵⁹ Prior to the crisis, an estimated 11 million children of primary school age were out of school across the four countries.⁶⁰

The pressure to absorb internally displaced and refugee populations has placed additional strain on the already limited capacity of national education systems to meet the education needs of their own populations, particularly in the regions affected by the violence and displacement. In all affected countries there is a shortage of infrastructure, qualified teachers and pedagogic materials, as well as remedial programs.

Further challenges include ensuring the relevance of curricula to the lived experiences of refugee, IDP and returnee children and youth, as well as language differences between refugee children and host communities. Secondary and multiple displacements have also complicated effective planning and response.

⁵³ OCHA 2019-2021 Nigeria Humanitarian Response Strategy, December 2018

⁵⁴ UNICEF Regional EiE Dashboard, March 2019

⁵⁵ UNHCR, de violentes attaques au Nigéria poussent des milliers de réfugiés à fuir vers le Niger, 28 May 2019

⁵⁶ See e.g. UNHCR, Education Issue Brief I: Education and Protection, July 2015.

⁵⁷ Safe School Declaration, 2015. UNHCR, UNICEF among others are member of the Steering Committee of the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack.

⁵⁸ Guidelines for protection schools and universities from military use during armed conflict.

⁵⁹ UNHCR, Nigeria Regional Refugee Response Plan 2016, p. 56.

⁶⁰ UNICEF, Nigeria conflict forces more than 1 million children from school, 22 Dec 2015.

Disruption to learning must be minimized through the provision of a continuum of services in education from the onset of the displacement, and affected children and youth engaged constructively to deal

with the impact of conflict and displacement, including psycho-social distress.

Objectives

1. Strengthen the equitable and inclusive access to quality age- and cognitive- appropriate early childhood development programmes, primary and secondary education for children and youth (3-17 years of age) whose access to formal education has been interrupted, and for children and youth who have not had prior access to formal education, including those from the host community.
2. Enhance the protection, wellbeing and development of children and youth by ensuring that their learning environments are secure, safe and protected from attacks and provide for the psychosocial well-being of learners, teachers and other education personnel.

Protection priorities

1. Ensure access to safe and protected from attacks basic education infrastructures and programmes to provide immediate protection through education routines for children aged 3 to 17 years affected by the crisis as well through systems enabling the identification of protection cases among EiE target group to provide external referral, PSS or case management.
2. Include measures on prevention and response to school-related gender-based violence as well as mitigation measures to ensure enrolment and retention of girls.
3. Ensure the education response is conflict sensitive and adapted to the longer term education needs of children and youth in case of either extended displacement or return with the overall objective to minimize the interruption of their education and to manage effectively transition from emergency response to longer term solutions, and to promote community participation to ensure involvement in education.
4. Promote the deployment of an adequate number of qualified teachers, including refugee teachers in refugee settings, in the schools and strengthen teacher and educational staff capacity with regard to psycho-social support, class-room management and peace education.
5. Advocate with local authorities and national Ministries of Education to ensure accreditation from alternative learning programs when relevant and the smooth integration of refugee learners into accredited national systems and programs as soon as possible, including through provision of language support and accelerated learning opportunities, as needed.⁶¹

Response strategy⁶²

Humanitarian actors will continue to support and work with Ministries of Education, local authorities and communities to **help ensure access to safe ability, age and gender and conflict sensitive appropriate educational programs** of certified quality, delivered by trained teachers. This includes the rehabilitation and construction of classrooms, as well as capacity building and the distribution of school kits, learning and teaching material.

Advocacy will be conducted with local and national authorities to ensure accreditation from alternative learning programs when relevant and the smooth **integration of refugee learners into national systems** as soon as possible, including through provision of language support, as needed. Accelerated education and remedial programmes will continue to be implemented to facilitate access to either formal education systems or professional/ vocational programmes.

⁶¹ UNHCR, Education Strategy 2012-2016.

⁶² The response will be guided by the INEE Minimum Standards on Education.

Sensitization on school enrolment among all conflict affected communities will continue, with particular attention to girls' education and gender issues, and protection from SGBV at school. School feeding programmes will remain an important intervention. Efforts will be made to ensure classroom interaction and educational content are conflict-sensitive and directly engage in issues related to peace building, social cohesion and integration as well as peaceful conflict-resolution.

Humanitarian actors will advocate for and support the **recruitment, deployment and capacity building of teachers**, including refugee teachers in refugee settings. Capacity building should focus in particular on conflict-sensitive teaching, psycho-social support, class-room management, and child-centred and participatory teaching and conceptual problem-solving learning methods. Codes of conduct will be promoted in schools as a tool to help ensure teachers understand their roles and responsibilities clearly and children are protected.

Measures to help ensure **learning environments are safe and protective** will include ensuring that school compounds are fenced, located in safe areas and provide access to clean drinking water and gender separated toilets. Standards and procedures must be in place to protect schools from attacks, particular in insecure areas, and monitoring and reporting systems established. All affected countries should be supported in implementing the 2015 Safe Schools Declaration and using the *Guidelines for protecting schools and universities from military use during armed conflict*, and bring them into domestic policy and operational frameworks as far as possible and appropriate.

Humanitarian actors will support **effective management of the humanitarian-development continuum**. Collaboration will be strengthened with existing humanitarian and development coordination bodies⁶³ to link the humanitarian response with longer term national development aspirations, including national education sector plans and the SDG4 process, in line with the commitments made in the Global Compact on Refugees.⁶⁴ Joint assessments and data and information sharing among national, humanitarian and development actors will be prioritised and strengthened to facilitate planning, national capacity building and system strengthening, as well as risk informed education planning and programming.

Comprehensive durable solutions

Problem statement

Conditions in most parts of north-eastern Nigeria are not yet conducive for a safe and dignified return due to continuing insecurity and the absence of basic services, which pose acute humanitarian and protection risks for the affected populations.⁶⁵ A similar situation of insecurity prevails in the border regions of Cameroon, Chad and Niger, where hostilities are ongoing including attacks on civilians.

Conflict continues to cause new displacement. Spontaneous returns of IDPs and refugees have been observed in North East Nigeria, including in some areas newly under government's control. However push and pull factors need to be carefully considered. A significant number of IDPs and refugees have returned, sometimes under conditions which have not been voluntary, safe and dignified, ending on secondary or tertiary displacement. In

addition, some of these refugee and IDP return movements have involved serious risks resulting in some of the displaced population going into secondary displacement. In all four countries, housing, land and property issues are proving to be a significant protection issue where returns are happening.

Premature return, undertaken before conditions are in place and movements can be qualified as genuinely voluntary, gives rise to serious protection risks and can undermine longer term peace and recovery efforts by States. Particular attention must therefore be paid to ensuring the voluntariness of any return movements, including by taking steps to enable refugees and IDPs to access up-to-date and reliable information to take well-informed decisions. It is equally necessary to safeguard against push

⁶³ Global Partnership for Education, Country-Level Process Guide, August 2015.

⁶⁴ Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action, 2015.

⁶⁵; UNHCR 2019-2020 Nigeria Regional Refugee Response Plan 2017. See also, UNHCR, International Protection Considerations with regard to people fleeing northeastern Nigeria (the states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa) and surrounding region – Update II, October 2016, paras. 12-13.

factors and unfavourable conditions in refugee and IDP hosting areas, which may induce returns when conditions are not yet conducive.

Alternative solutions must be present. In IDP and refugee hosting areas, there is a need to invest in peaceful coexistence initiatives that contribute to the resilience of all affected communities.⁶⁶ Such initiatives might be planned as part of rule of law and governance programming as well as in other sectors.

This is all the more important in view of the fragile socio-economic conditions in much of the Sahel, where displacement is placing additional strain on scarce resources and services. Among the 19.4 million persons living in the areas most affected by this conflict across the four countries, as of March 2019, 9.9 million are in need of humanitarian assistance, and an estimated 4.8 million persons are severely food insecure.⁶⁷

The crisis has disrupted economic and livelihood activities in host communities, including fishing, farming, cattle rearing, cross-border trade and markets. The supply and prices of food and other basic items have also been affected.

The food scarcity, initially the consequence of the plummeting production and massive displacement, was compounded by the destruction of economic infrastructure as well as the restriction imposed on several key economic activities in large sections of Borno state. The fighting destroyed 30 per cent of

houses, water sources, roads and bridges in the area, crippling agriculture and other economic activities. Road closures and curfews further restricted trade and free movement of persons.⁶⁸

There is a need to strengthen the self-reliance of refugees and IDPs as well as the resilience of all conflict-affected communities. Local infrastructure and services need strengthening alongside investment in public services such as health and education, which are crucial for achieving sustainable peace and development.

In achieving the above-mentioned as well as in anticipation of solutions, development actors need to be mobilized and engaged as soon as possible and planning broadened so as to include hosting and return areas, taking into account the specific needs and protection concerns of conflict-affected communities. Humanitarian actors, likewise, need to design programming so as to be consistent with national systems and to prepare to withdraw in favour of national and international development.

A comprehensive solutions approach is needed to support processes aimed at achieving all durable solutions. Governments have begun planning for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of some affected areas, and protection should remain central to such efforts, paying particular attention to persons with specific needs.

Objectives

1. The self-reliance of IDPs and refugees is strengthened and the resilience of all affected communities enhanced.
2. Processes aimed at achieving all durable solutions for refugees and IDPs are strengthened [local integration, voluntary return, and relocation for IDPs and resettlement to a third country for refugees].
3. Governments are supported in establishing the nexus between humanitarian response and development to support durable solutions for displaced persons such as local integration and reintegration.
4. Humanitarian principles are honoured by all interventions in conflict and return areas.

Protection priorities

1. Improve sustainable gender equal livelihood opportunities for displaced and host communities and promote peaceful co-existence through a community-based approach and addressing the needs of host communities in assistance and response.

⁶⁶ For example, in Cameroon and Niger, clashes between pastoralists who were forcibly displaced and agriculturalists in host communities have been reported, as crops are affected by increased grazing activity in host communities. World Bank/UNHCR, Forced Displacement by the Boko Haram conflict in the Lake Chad region, Oct 2016, p. 52.

⁶⁷ OCHA, Lake Chad Basin Crisis Overview, March 2019.

⁶⁸ UNDP, National Human Development Report 2018: Nigeria

2. Encourage governments to enhance socio-economic inclusion of displaced populations, ensuring equal access to markets and employment for refugees in national laws.
3. Ensure that all refugee and IDP returns are voluntary, in safety and dignity and pursue implementation of alternatives to camps, local resettlement and local integration. Push and pull factors for unsafe return are mitigated.
4. Support Governments in the development of comprehensive durable solutions plans for refugees and IDPs, taking into account all durable solutions, and ensure the involvement of the affected populations in planning.
5. Promote greater partnerships, information sharing and programming in line with state solutions strategies, building synergies with global and regional approaches and strengthening the humanitarian and development nexus for the achievement of comprehensive solutions.
6. Promote transitional justice and social cohesion.

Response strategy

In order to strengthen the **self-reliance of displaced persons and the resilience of all affected communities**, humanitarian actors will enhance gender balanced access to basic services; livelihood opportunities and financial services; access to education; and encourage the use of environmentally friendly measures. The socio-economic inclusion of displaced persons will be promoted, supporting initiatives for an equal access to markets and employment for displaced people and refugees in national laws to enhance their self-reliance,

Governments will be supported in **developing comprehensive durable solutions plans for refugees and IDPs** in line with national and local development plans and ensure the involvement of the affected populations in planning. Resettlement will be used as a protection tool for refugees in specific cases. For IDPs, in line with the Kampala Convention, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs, the needs, rights and legitimate interests of IDPs should be the primary consideration guiding all policies and decision on durable solutions.

Humanitarian actors will **ensure that refugee and IDP returns are voluntary, safe, carried out in conditions of dignity, and based on well-informed decisions, once conditions are conducive**, and that facilitated returns of refugees are within the framework of tripartite agreements and respect the principle of *non-refoulement*. To this end, humanitarian actors will continue to assess refugee and IDP return aspirations; monitor the voluntary nature of return movements and conditions in areas of origin; pursue proactive approaches to local resettlement and local integration, and implementation of alternatives to camps. Push and pull factors for unsafe return will be carefully analysed and mitigated.

Humanitarian actors will **support assessment and planning processes for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of conflict-affected areas, guided by humanitarian principles**, and they will seek to ensure key considerations for the durability of return and reintegration are addressed, including housing and property restitution; family reunification; the need for peace and reconciliation activities; support to victims of trauma, including in particular women and children survivors of violence, captivity and detention; access to documentation and to basic services; and provision of legal aid. Engagement and adequate expertise in protection and Cash-Based-Initiatives will be strengthened, along with the re-establishment of financial institutions.

Collaboration and coordination between humanitarian and development actors will be strengthened to help establish the humanitarian development nexus and synergies will be built with global and regional approaches in the framework of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework. Joint and coordinated planning is key to ensuring refugees, IDPs and returnees are included in national development planning and processes, such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and plans to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. Development plans should include also analysis of the root causes of displacement in the Lake Chad Basin Situation and seek to address these.

Assistance and protection to other affected populations

Problem statement

Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria have all traditionally been home to significant migrant populations, some of whom have also been affected by the crisis and face particular protection risks. Such migrants in the countries in crisis (MICIC)⁶⁹ may also be in need of emergency assistance or have particular protection needs.

In fact, many of them have the same basic physical and psycho-social needs as refugees and IDPs, and their emergency needs should be addressed and, as appropriate, included in the broader humanitarian response. They may also need to be referred for consular protection and assistance.

Some migrants living in north-eastern Nigeria at the onset of the crisis fled to neighbouring countries, including a significant number of long-term migrants who returned to their countries of origin or nationality. In the case of Niger, persons who fled Nigeria to the Diffa region included thousands of returning nationals, many of whom lacked ties to Niger and became internally displaced upon arrival. As of May 2019, over 25,000 persons living in displacement in Diffa identify as returning Niger nationals, according to Government statistics.⁷⁰

IOM has also identified over 26,298 Chadian nationals who returned to Chad from Niger and Nigeria, as well as around 9,421 Cameroonian nationals who returned to Cameroon from Nigeria.⁷¹

The mixed character of displacement movements, coupled with low levels of documentation has made it difficult in some contexts to discern between refugees, IDPs, third country nationals, returning nationals and local residents. Lack of documentation and inaccurate profiling may limit access by third country nationals to consular protection and assistance, and place them at risk of deportation to countries to which they have no ties.

Some of the affected countries have put in place security measures that also affect and sometimes target non-nationals, such as increased document controls and the deportation of undocumented migrants.⁷² There are reports of human rights concerns in this context,⁷³ including that lack of documentation has led in some cases to indefinite detention.

Particular attention should be paid to migrants and returning nationals who are at risk of statelessness or may be stateless, and their specific needs addressed. For example, among returning nationals, many have resided in Nigeria for many years and are without documentation, or have children whose birth in Nigeria was not registered or is not recognized by the country of origin, placing them at heightened risk of statelessness. Among Nigerian migrants who have been residing in Cameroon, Chad and Niger, many also lack documentation and may not be able to obtain proof of nationality due to gaps in laws and procedures, also upon return to Nigeria.

⁶⁹ See generally, IOM, Guidelines to Protection Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster, June 2016.

⁷⁰ UNHCR Operational Portal, Niger Country page.

⁷¹ IOM, Within and Beyond Borders: Tracking Displacement in the Lake Chad Basin, March 2019.

⁷² See e.g. Africa Review : Chad expels several foreigners, 30 June 2015; Jeune Afrique, Terrorisme: Les 9 mesures phares prises par le Cameroun pour se protéger de Boko Haram, 29 July 2015. See also,

generally, IOM, Within and Beyond Borders: Tracking Displacement in the Lake Chad Basin, March 2019

⁷³ See e.g. UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, compilation on Nigeria,, 27 August 2018, A/HRC/WG.6/31/NGA/2; Human Rights Watch, World Report 2019: Events of 2015/8, January 2019

Objectives

1. Third country nationals and returning nationals in mixed flows are promptly identified and referred to appropriate assistance and services.
2. Third country nationals and returning nationals fleeing the conflict and who are in need of immediate physical or psycho-social attention to meet their basic needs receive appropriate support.
3. The risk of statelessness among third country nationals and returning nationals is reduced.

Protection priorities

1. Strengthen identification and profiling mechanisms in mixed flows and ensure referral of third country nationals to appropriate assistance and services, such as consular services.
2. Ensure the emergency basic needs of third country nationals and returning nationals fleeing the conflict are met and, as appropriate, include them in the broader humanitarian response.
3. Strengthen the identification of returning nationals and third country nationals at risk of statelessness and ensure their inclusion in statelessness prevention and response efforts.

Response Strategy

All civilians fleeing conflict, regardless of their nationality, status, or background, should be provided with assistance that gives them **immediate physical protection and access to essential services** (food, shelter, water & sanitation, health & nutrition, education). Humanitarian actors will work to ensure the **basic physical and psycho-social needs** of third country nationals and returning nationals who fled are addressed and include them, as appropriate, in the broader humanitarian response.

Humanitarian actors will support Governments to ensure migrants in crisis **(MICIC) are promptly identified and referred to appropriate assistance and services**. In particular, humanitarian actors will support Governments to **strengthen identification and profiling mechanisms** in mixed flows and set up or strengthen referral systems to appropriate services and assistance, such as consular services.

Humanitarian actors will advocate for and promote the identification of third country nationals and returning nationals at risk of statelessness and appropriate response. To this end, humanitarian actors will ensure their **inclusion in statelessness prevention and response activities**, including targeted advocacy on their particular situation and needs.

Annex I

Regional Protection Dialogue on the Lake Chad Basin Abuja Action Statement

We, the Governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger, with the support of technical and financial partners gathered in Abuja, Nigeria, on 6 to 8 June 2016 within the framework of the *Regional Protection Dialogue on the Lake Chad Basin*, hosted by the Federal Government of Nigeria, with the technical facilitation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to discuss the most urgent protection risks in the Lake Chad Basin resulting from the conflict-induced crisis;

Agree on comprehensive actions to enhance protection and respond to the most urgent needs of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other affected populations;

Note that the Boko Haram insurgency and its spill over into neighbouring Cameroon, Chad and Niger have caused the displacement of over 2.7 million people in the region, of whom 2.1 million are internally displaced in Nigeria, while some 155,000 Nigerian refugees have sought asylum in Cameroon, Chad and Niger. The refugee-hosting countries also have sizeable IDP populations (Cameroon: 200,000; Chad: 110,000; and Niger: 127,208);

Reaffirm the validity of the principles and standards of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol as well as the 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa ("OAU Refugee Convention"), in particular the principle of *non-refoulement*; the 2009 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa ("Kampala Convention"), especially the prohibition of forced displacement and the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness ("1954 and 1961 Conventions on Statelessness");

Recognize that while military operations have led to significant advances in the fight against Boko Haram and have brought back a number of areas in north-eastern Nigeria under Government control, conditions in much of the north-east are not yet conducive for the return of Nigerian refugees and IDPs, due to continuing insecurity and the absence of basic services which pose acute humanitarian and protection risks for the affected populations, particularly in Borno state;

Further note that alongside persistent threats from Boko Haram, the presence of mines and unexploded improvised devices, climatic change as well as the drying up of Lake Chad, which exacerbate pre-existing vulnerabilities, further poses protection risks for the affected populations in the border regions of Cameroon, Chad and Niger, where Boko Haram attacks on civilians also continue or have intensified in some instances;

Recognize the legitimate national security concerns of the States and the need to ensure an appropriate balance between security and human rights, the obligation to protect IDPs and refugees, and the right to seek and enjoy asylum;

Stress the importance of maintaining the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee and IDP-hosting areas as an important protection standard with broad implications on other protection issues such as physical security, the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), prevention of child recruitment as well as access to assistance;

Note that the crisis has seriously impacted the most vulnerable civilians, including refugees, IDPs and host communities, particularly women and children at risk, older persons and persons with disabilities or serious medical conditions; that violence against women and children, including SGBV, is widespread, that many persons have suffered the trauma of violent experiences and that there is a significant rise in the number of child and female-headed households;

Welcome the progress made in the region in identifying, preventing and reducing statelessness, including the signing of the 2015 Abidjan Declaration of Ministers of ECOWAS Member States on Eradication of Statelessness by Nigeria and Niger, while **recognizing** that there are still important challenges, in particular the high number of

persons in the region who lack documentation and have difficulties proving their nationality and therefore remain at risk of statelessness.

In view of the foregoing:

In the area of forced displacement and freedom of movement in conflict, we agree to:

1. *Take* concrete steps, including continuous monitoring, to ensure that security measures such as restrictions on freedom of movement in the context of state of emergency and evacuations comply with international standards, and are temporary and exceptional in nature.
2. *Strengthen* collaboration between government actors, humanitarian organisations, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure the voluntariness of return and the freedom of movement of displaced persons as well as their physical security.
3. *Develop and implement* practical measures to ensure an appropriate balance between security and respect for the right to seek and enjoy asylum, including respect for the principle of *non-refoulement*, protection of IDPs and related human rights.
4. *Promote* knowledge and training among all stakeholders, including government actors, such as security forces, international organizations and civil society, of the limits and safeguards of refugee and IDP protection, as outlined in international and regional legal instruments such as the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1969 OAU Convention, and the Kampala Convention.
5. *Enhance* regional coordination and exchange of best practices through greater engagement by States and humanitarian actors with regional institutions such as the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).
6. *Commit* to prioritize the ratification, domestication and implementation of international conventions, including the Kampala Convention.

In the area of civil-military coordination and the civilian character of refugee and IDP hosting areas, we agree to:

7. *Develop* a capacity building program (training) for security forces and the MNJTF on key international humanitarian standards, international protection and human rights, civilian and humanitarian character of refugee and IDP sites, and sensitize humanitarian and military actors on civil-military coordination to protect and promote humanitarian principles.
8. *Enhance* civil-military coordination to ensure an appropriate distinction between the roles of humanitarian actors and security forces as well as to enable humanitarian actors to reach people in need of assistance in difficult to reach areas.
9. *Enhance* screening and other security measures to maintain the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee and IDP sites, ensuring that these are conducted in a dignified manner and are gender and age-sensitive. *Encourage* at the same time greater information-sharing, while ensuring the protection of informants, IDPs, refugees, humanitarian actors, etc.
10. *Strengthen* access to justice, support the development of legal frameworks, provide legal assistance and encourage communities to use traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, where applicable and provided these are not in violation of national law.

In the area of persons with specific protection risks, we agree to:

11. *Strengthen* the identification of persons with specific needs, such as women and children at risk, through multi-sectoral needs assessments, improved registration and profiling, while ensuring data protection.
12. *Improve* multi-sectoral referral and response mechanisms in order to ensure better access to basic services.
13. *Pay* particular attention to the needs of children at risk, including unaccompanied and separated children and children at risk of exposure to SGBV, child recruitment, forced marriage, exploitation and abuse; and *ensure* referral to appropriate services, such as psychosocial support and post-traumatic services.

14. *Ensure* an increased involvement of local communities and community-based organizations in the provision of support and services to most vulnerable groups, including older persons, the chronically ill, persons with disabilities and youth, through improved protection coordination and a greater involvement of the affected populations.
15. *Commit to* promulgate national legislation aimed at protecting and increasing the involvement and engagement of affected populations through advocacy and awareness campaigns.

In the area of comprehensive solutions approach, we agree to:

16. *Support* the processes aimed at achieving all durable solutions [local integration, voluntary return, and relocation for IDPs and resettlement to a third country for refugees], including by enhancing access to basic services, livelihood opportunities, and financial services; promoting peaceful co-existence among refugee, IDP and host communities; and encouraging environmentally friendly measures.
17. *Ensure* that refugee and IDP returns are voluntary, in safety and dignity, and based on well-informed decisions, once conditions are conducive, and that facilitated returns of refugees are within the framework of a tripartite agreement, and respect the principle of *non-refoulement*.
18. *Establish* the nexus between humanitarian response and development to support durable solutions such as local integration and reintegration, through joint and coordinated planning between humanitarian and development actors to ensure the inclusion of refugees, IDPs and returnees in development planning.
19. *Guarantee* the centrality of protection by ensuring the participation of affected persons in the planning and implementation of solutions, taking into account age, gender and diversity, and paying particular attention to persons with specific needs.

In the area of right to nationality and documentation, we agree to:

20. *Conduct* awareness campaigns on the importance of civil registration and relevant procedures, through the use of local media and the involvement of traditional and religious leaders.
21. *Simplify* birth registration and civil documentation procedures; organize and equip mobile registration centers and create more registration centers especially in remote areas; integrate birth registration in other sectors, such as education and health; and reduce the cost of birth registration and documentation.
22. *Ensure* national laws and policies comply with existing relevant international and regional standards, for example as defined in the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on Statelessness, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and to support the adoption of a Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the right to nationality and eradication of statelessness.
23. *Create* a forum for consultation and sharing of best practices between States on issues of civil documentation and the risk of statelessness in the Lake Chad Basin.

Follow-up mechanism

To ensure follow-up of the above outlined actions, we further agree to:

24. *Establish* a plan of action at national level within 6 months of the adoption of the Action Statement, and review progress in implementation at national level at regular periods of no more than 6 months, and at regional level after 12 months.

Done in Abuja, Nigeria, on 8 June 2016

Second Regional Protection Dialogue on the Lake Chad Basin Reaffirmation of the Commitments of the Abuja Action Statement and their Implementation

Recalling the common purpose and objectives of the Abuja Action Statement of 8 June 2016, the Governments of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria, with the participation of a broad range of partners engaged in the response to forced displacement, convened a second Regional Protection Dialogue (RPD 2), on 28-29 January 2019.

Hosted by the Federal Government of Nigeria, with the technical facilitation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the RPD 2 was an opportunity to review the protection situation in all four countries, taking stock of progress and examining current challenges with a view to enhancing the response to the urgent needs of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees and host communities.

United in their intention to address the root causes of displacement and realize sustainable solutions for those affected by conflict, the Governments of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria:

Reaffirmed the importance of unwavering support to addressing the issues highlighted by the Abuja Action Statement;

Noted the continued volatility of the security situation in the Lake Chad Basin, the persistently high numbers of forcibly displaced and the extent of ongoing protection challenges;

Commended progress on strengthened legislative frameworks, reinforced coordination and dedicated attention to building capacity for meaningful and effective action;

Acknowledged the continued centrality of protection, access to asylum and the principle of non-refoulement, in line with the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and its 1967 Protocol, relevant international and regional instruments, as well as national laws and policies.

Reiterated the importance of regional efforts to seek solutions to forced displacement, in particular in the context of the momentum created by the African Union's Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons, marking the 50-year anniversary of the 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (OAU Refugee Convention) and the 10-year anniversary of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention);

Recommended continued joint efforts by political, humanitarian, development and peace actors to address the protection and development needs of affected populations in the Lake Chad Basin and prepare the ground for solutions including sustainable reintegration upon voluntary return.

Recognized the relevance of broad initiatives geared towards the economic and development capacity of the wider region, including the Lake Chad Basin Commission Strategy, the Oslo I and Oslo II Conferences, and other related fora and their potential to alleviate the impact of forced displacement and contribute to the attainment of solutions;

Applauded the significant global developments towards reinforced international burden- and responsibility sharing and the operationalization of comprehensive responses, as set out in the 2018 *Global Compact on Refugees*, and the practical application of the *Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework*, as an integral part of the Compact, building on the 2016 *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants*.

Noted that the broad range of arrangements to support comprehensive responses in specific situations, including through regional and sub-regional collaboration, and responses in support of refugees and local communities, articulated by the Global Compact on Refugees, can also address the plight of IDPs and returnees.

Welcomed the advances made by development actors in support of government-led comprehensive responses and, committed to explore further opportunities to include refugees, IDPs and other affected populations into national and local service delivery;

Underlined the importance of credible data across all areas of action to support evidence-based responses;

Recognized the importance of continuous efforts and opportunities to further expand comprehensive responses, building on whole-of-government, multi-stakeholder engagement at national and local levels, and seeking opportunities for inclusive support to displaced and local populations through well aligned national and local development plans;

Noted the specific role and contribution of Ministries of Budget and Planning of the four countries, to effective planning and budgeting in support of the implementation of the Abuja Action Statement;

Affirmed the importance of feedback and accountability mechanisms to establish transparent linkages between interventions and the benefits resulting for affected populations;

Encouraged the preparation of an updated regional action plan based on national action plans to maximize opportunities for further progress in the five areas outlined in the 2016 Abuja Action Statement, keeping these under active and regular review, with the possibility to inform pledges for announcement at the first *Global Refugee Forum* to be held in Geneva in December 2019.

Thematically framed Working Group discussions generated reflections and observations, in the form of recommendations, to encourage continued collaboration within and between the four countries across the key areas of the Abuja Action Statement. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of improved coordination across all areas, including through the role and relevance of existing entities, as well as strengthened coordination capacity of civil society and non-governmental organizations.

Regarding Forced Displacement, Access to Asylum and Protection

Access to asylum and protection from refoulement are critical elements of the success of measures to enhance meaningful security standards in the context of ongoing instability and the presence of non-state armed groups. The primacy of human rights in the implementation of security measures is recognized throughout.

1. Ensure that refugees have effective access to asylum and protection from refoulement;
2. Expedite domestication and effective implementation of the Kampala Convention, and ensure application of national legislation related to refugees and IDPs;
3. Accelerate re-establishment of civil authorities and basic services in conflict affected areas;
4. Reinforce coordination and information sharing between humanitarian actors and national and local authorities;

Regarding Civil-Military Coordination and the Civilian Character of Refugee and IDP Hosting Areas

Full understanding of the specific protection challenges in country is key to good practices for civil-military coordination, which in turn help reduce protection risks faced by refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities. Maintaining full respect for the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee and IDP sites/hosting areas is of central importance, including through close collaboration between administrative authorities, security and police forces, humanitarian actors and the affected populations.

1. Increase, streamline and coordinate capacity building on international human rights and humanitarian law, and civil-military guidelines;
2. Enhance regional analysis and information exchange on security and population movements, including through regular cross border civil-military meetings;
3. Increase accountability for human rights violations against affected populations, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).
4. Address impunity including by ensuring access to justice, detention monitoring and building synergies between the protocols of humanitarian and military actors for the investigation of these violations.

5. Ensure security screening complies with international standards and the respect of the right to access asylum;
6. Support the civilian management of IDP and refugee sites, to guarantee their civilian and humanitarian character;
7. Foster information exchange between administrative authorities, security forces, traditional leaders, humanitarian actors and affected populations;
8. Strengthen civil-military coordination at all levels in support of increased access to affected populations, incorporating the presence of female officers and child protection officers.

Regarding Persons with Specific Protection Needs

Renewed commitment to the highest standards of response to persons with specific protection needs requires that they be adequately identified and prioritized by the humanitarian response, particularly in areas where humanitarian actors have limited access. A common purpose is to ensure that persons with specific protection needs can access protection and services, allowing for the prioritization of attention to survivors of violence, protection of children at risk of recruitment and, strengthened demobilization and reintegration of children associated with armed groups.

1. Facilitate access, protection and accountability to persons and groups with specific needs, including accessibility to essential services for those in hard to reach areas;
2. Include persons with specific needs in national initiatives, social protection programmes and safety net mechanisms, including local communities' participation in the planning and implementation of projects in accordance with age, gender and diversity principles;
3. Strengthen accountability to affected populations, including opportunities for participation and complaint mechanisms;
4. Ensure specific provisions for the demobilization and reintegration of individuals, in particular children, leaving armed groups and support to cross-border tracing and reunification mechanisms for all separated and unaccompanied children;
5. Pursue a standard and harmonized procedure across the 4 countries for multi-sectoral needs assessments and improved registration and profiling that ensures adequate data protection.

Regarding Comprehensive Solutions Approaches

The protracted nature of displacement calls for greater leveraging of opportunities to implement comprehensive solutions approaches, including by strengthening the resilience of affected populations and preparing them for solutions through increased self-reliance and access to services on par with local populations. The humanitarian-development nexus, and the support offered by UNDAF, is critical, including to ensure that economic growth and structural investments benefit displacement affected areas as a whole in line with national and local development plans.

1. Pursue viable opportunities to realize sustainable voluntary return in conditions of safety and dignity, proactive approaches to local resettlement and local integration, and implementation of alternatives to camps;
2. Reinforce the inclusion of conflict affected populations, including refugees, in national and local service delivery and advance their socio-economic well-being by enabling access to markets and employment;
3. Increase engagement and expertise on Cash-Based-Initiatives and related activities along with the re-establishment of financial institutions in areas affected by conflict;
4. Foster partnerships, information sharing, and programming, in line with national and local development plans, and the Regional Strategy for Stabilization, Recovery and the Development of the Boko Haram Affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin;

5. Seek complementary funding and other forms of assistance from a broad range of stakeholders, including bilateral and multilateral development actors, in support of strategies and comprehensive solutions approaches.

Regarding Nationality and Documentation

Civil registration and documentation are tools for both protection and solutions, including for persons with specific needs, and also enhance State capacity for accurate information on persons on their territory. Alongside the strengthening of national policies, procedures and capacity, continued attention is required to raise awareness of the importance of civil registration and documentation, especially to ensure that every child is registered immediately after birth and that late birth registration is available without discrimination.

1. Collaborate with civil society organizations on a broad range of information campaigns and the provision of legal and practical assistance to access documentation;
2. Proactive attention to birth registration in programming and operation procedures in the health and education sectors;
3. Reinforce government-led registration processes and the application of resulting data in the best interests of the needs of affected populations;
4. Provide access to civil documentation, including for children born in countries of asylum;
5. Establish registration systems for IDPs to support timely protection, assistance and identification of solutions;
6. Pursue national plans to eradicate statelessness, including the adoption or amendment of relevant legislation or policies to prevent and reduce statelessness.

Done in Abuja, Nigeria, on 29 January 2019